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JOHN BUNCLE, JUNIOR.

GENTLEMAN.

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THE

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LET-

LETTER IX.

STOW GARDENS.

A work to wonder at; -- perhaps a STOW.

POPE.

LETTER IX.

Stow Gardens, July, 1763.

TO MARIA.

I TOLD you, Maria, in a former Epiſtle, that my chamber-windows faced the *Eaſt*. This I experienced early the next morning by the ſun's ſhining full in my face as I lay in bed. His viſit at firſt diſconcerted me, and I began to think his godſhip ſomewhat uncivil, thus to intrude upon the right every man has of being retired in his own apartments. But yet he conducted himſelf with ſuch perfect chearfulneſs and good humour, that the ſoureſt churl upon earth could not ſurely have been angry with him. He addreſſed, or ſeemed to addreſs me, in the following manner,

"My good friend, preſuming that you are not come into theſe delightful regions, to cloſe your eyes upon them in ſleep, I have ventured to awaken you. It is true *I* have riſen theſe two hours; but not to put too great a force upon your city-depraved natures, I was unwilling to diſturb you and your companions ſooner. However, (ſays he) ſmiling, I have been conſulting your enjoyment:—I have been warming the atmoſphere for your reception:—I have been drying up the dews of the night, that the ladies may walk in ſafety:—The birds are long ſince awakened to their matins:—The flies are already meandering in my beams:—I have commanded the roſe, the hyacinth, the jeſſamine and woodbine to diffuſe their odours:—My lights and ſhades I hope are diſpoſed to your liking:—In ſhort, I have done my beſt to give you a pleaſant ramble this morning, and now I wait to attend you to the gardens."

'THANK

'THANK thee, OLD BENEVOLENCE, I thank thee from my ſoul, quoth I, leaping up and looking out of the window to take a peep at a ſpecimen of his morning's employment. Chearfully do I obey your ſummons, and join party with yon wakeful huſbandman,—for a huſbandman was at that inſtant paſſing by,—whoſe heart thou haſt exhilerated with thy early beams theſe three-ſcore years and ten, and laugh with him at the degenerate ſlothful race of mortals, who wilfully cloſe their eyes upon thy cheary ray!

I AROSE immediately, and communicating the ſun's ſpeech to my fellow travellers, they were ſo well pleaſed with this invitation, that in a few minutes they made themſelves ready for the expedition.

WE entered theſe celebrated gardens at the eaſtern quarter. Although I had heard much of them, and my expectations were

conſiderably raiſed, yet I will confeſs that they ſtruck me with a moſt agreeable ſurprize. The firſt impreſſion, to which I always pay great deference, as it is in ſome caſes the beſt touch-ſtone of excellence, the firſt impreſſion was beyond deſcription or imagination enchanting. It was ſomething ſimilar to what *Telemachus* may be ſuppoſed to have felt, when he entered the *Elyſian Fields*. An aſſemblage of every thing formed to charm or captivate, poured in upon the ſenſes, the inſtant we were admitted into theſe regions of *paradiſe*; for ſo they appeared. Shady walks contraſted by open lawns; extenſive platforms, relieved by cryſtal lakes and meandering ſtreams; ſweet odours exhaling from an infinite variety of aromatic ſhrubs and flowers, whoſe beauty equalled their ſweetneſs; cheary notes of the black bird, the thruſh, the lark and the linnet, which ſeemed to know their privileges, and to haunt this delightful ſpot by choice; the ſoothing murmurs of rivulets

rivulets and caſcades, all united to form a ſcene, which could not fail to charm every admirer of rural elegance. But theſe pleaſing objects of *nature* were amazingly enriched and enlivened by various works of *art*, and by a number of magnificent ſtructures; ſuch as *pavilions*, *obeliſks*, *temples*, *monuments*, *pyramids*, *bridges*, *columns*; as alſo *caves*, *ſtatues*, *rock-works*, &c. Some of theſe ſtructures are erected in the centre of a plain, and command the ſight from every quarter. But the greater number are artfully hid by the diſpoſition of the ground, or by plantations of trees and ſhrubs; ſo that, altho' in one point of view they become the principal object, or happily terminate a perſpective, in every other direction they are either totally concealed, or ſeen obliquely, or they catch the eye with a tranſient glance as you paſs along;

> While half withdrawn they ſeem to hide,
> And half reveal their charms.

In general theſe various buildings are ſo

happily diſpoſed, that they do not intrude upon the proſpect, nor ſeem to croud the ground with too many objects; on the contrary, they frequently relieve it from an irkſome ſameneſs. In one place, for example, an *obeliſque* or *ſtatue*, terminates a walk; in another, a *pyramid* or a *bridge*, or a piece of *artificial ruins* diverſifies a plain; here a *temple* conſecrates a grove; in this verdant receſs an elegant *alcove* ſeems to invite the wearied wanderer to reſt; yonder a *ſacred turret* raiſes its venerable head at a diſtance, and inſpires the mind with a pleaſing ſolemnity; while the ſuperb *manſion*, commanding an extenſive view over the gardens, and frequently attracting the eye, ſeems to announce itſelf as the parent and guardian of the reſt.

IMAGINE to yourſelf, my dear friend, a citizen whoſe garments were ſtill ſcented with the ſmoke of the town, and whoſe retina was ſcarcely dilated from its darkneſs,

conveyed,

conveyed, after a long abſence from the beloved country, to ſuch a place, where every thing conſpired to charm him! The morning dilectably fine, the company perfectly agreeable, a freſh tide of ſpirits flowing in upon my returning health, theſe added to the novelty, grandeur and real beauty of the ſcene, excited emotions in my mind, which indeed were too ſtrong to ſuffer any witneſs! I watch'd the opportunity to ſeparate from my companions, and gave vent to my ſenſations, by uttering with more devotion than I had ever before experienced, that ſublime hymn of Milton,

Theſe are thy glorious works, parent of good
Almighty! Thine this univerſal frame
Thus wond'rous fair! &c.

I ſhall not attempt, Maria, a minute and particular deſcription of this enchanting place. The ſubject is much too copious. I will refer you therefore to thoſe deſcriptions which are already publiſhed; and which will enable you to form ſome imperfect concep-

tions of the extent, variety, and magnificence which reign in the delectable gardens of *Stow*.—Suppoſing one or other of theſe in your hand, I ſhall content myſelf with making ſome general obſervations.

You will readily perceive, that a great number of theſe buildings are not only formed to produce a grand effect, as objects of embelliſhments in the garden, but that they merit particular notice on account of the grandeur, the elegance, and beauty of their execution. Some of them are adorned with curious paintings;—as the *two pavilions* for example at the ſouth entrance of the garden;—the *temple of Venus*;—the *temple of Bacchus*, where the revel of that jolly god are well deſcribed by *Nollikins*.

Others of theſe edifices are remarkable for their magnificence, and inſtead of being the mere ornaments of a garden, they might ſerve as elegant villas for gentlemen of fortune. Such are the *temple of Friendſhip*,

Friendſhip, the *Ladies temple*, the *Grecian* and *Gothic temples*. To the claſs of elegant building we might add the *rotunda*, the *temple of antient virtue*, the *Palladian bridge*, and many others.

THE *artificial rock-work*, *Egyptian pyramid*, *Keeper's Lodge*,—which is in the form of an antient turret,—the *witch-houſe*, *temple of modern virtue*, and *St. Auguſtine's cave*, ſtrike out of the path of elegance, but they produce a good effect, either from the idea of antiquity with which they impreſs the mind, or acting like diſcord in muſic, or ſtrong ſhades in painting, afford an agreeable contraſt to the more finiſhed parts.

SOME of theſe numerous buildings are ſtill more agreeable upon account of the juſt tribute they pay to true greatneſs, virtue and patriotiſm. Amongſt theſe I place the temple dedicated to *Friendſhip*, the *imperial cloſet*, the *temple of antient and mo-*

dern virtue, the *temple of contemplation*, the *temple of Britiſh worthies*, and the various columns and monuments erected in honour of the deceaſed.

THE temple of *modern virtue* is no other than a confuſed heap of ruins, well imagined, ſo as to produce an agreeable effect, independent of the ſatire it is intended to convey. That of *antient virtue* on the contrary, is in a very flouriſhing ſtate. It is an elegant *rotunda* highly finiſhed. The inſide has four niches, in which are placed at full length, the ſtatues of *Lycurgus*, *Sotrates*, *Homer*, and *Epaminondas*. Under each of theſe is an inſcription, doing honor to the characteriſtic virtues of the lawgiver, the philoſopher, the poet, and the warrior.

THIS contraſt, my dear friend, is ſtriking and ſatirical, but I doubt whether it be *juſt*. The number of men, eminent either

ther for their wiſdom or virtues, in every age and in every country is comparatively ſmall: this the very title of *eminent* implies. To collect the diſtinguiſhed characters which flouriſhed at diſtant periods, and perhaps in different countries, to form one group of them, and then propoſe them as a contraſt to the moderns, is by no means doing juſtice to the queſtion. Although I cannot think with *Helvetius* that the genius of every man is perfectly equal, yet I am not of the ſame querulous humor with the old Count mentioned in *Gil Blas*, who complained that the very *peaches* of his days were degenerated. In fact truely great men are ſcarce in every age: it happens but ſeldom that ſuperior ſtrength of genius, and a concurrence of circumſtances favorable to the full expanſion of that genius ſhall coincide; nor is the remark of *Grey* more poetically beautiful than it is philoſophically juſt,

Full

Full many a gem of pureſt ray ſerene,
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to bluſh unſeen,
And waſte its fragrance in the deſart air.

It was the peculiar ſtate of *Sparta*, as ſome one has juſtly remarked, which enabled *Lycurgus* to form ſuch a code of laws as hath made him immortal. Had he endeavoured to enforce them at *Athens*, he would have been treated as a viſionary, and the greatneſs of his talents would only have expoſed him to the fate of our modern *Lycurgus*, *Rouſſeau*, to be admired by a few, laughed at by numbers, and neglected by all. It is the *occaſion* which frequently makes great men. The ſingular circumſtances of a nation, fortunate connections, a happy mode of education, muſt all unite with natural talents, in order to render a perſon conſpicuous. Wherever theſe were connected great men have appeared in all ages.

Not

NOT to enlarge farther upon this copious ſubject, Maria, I ſhall only obſerve, that the proprietor of the gardens has himſelf confirmed theſe ſentiments, and furniſhed us with a ſhield to ward off the force of his ſatire in his *temple of Britiſh worthies.* Had he called this the temple of *modern virtue,* and placed it contiguous to the other, I do not think we ſhould have any reaſon to bluſh at the compariſon, were he even to enlarge his number of antients.

THE ſight of this temple, I muſt confeſs gave me more real pleaſure than any one of theſe numerous edifices that adorn the gardens. It is a tribute juſtly due to the memory of thoſe it celebrates: and it muſt warm the heart of every Engliſhman to contemplate ſo many worthies, whom his country claims as her own.

THEIR names are as follow: Mr. Pope, Sir Thomas Greſham, Ignatius Jones, John Milton,

Milton, William Shakeſpear, John Locke, Sir Iſaac Newton, Sir Francis Bacon Lord Virulam, King Alfred, Edward Prince of Wales, Queen Elizabeth, King William the Third, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Drake, John Hampden, Sir John Barnard.

THIS catalogue might doubtleſs be enlarged, but as it ſtands, I believe it would be difficult for the warmeſt admirers of antiquity, to produce the ſame number of characters equally eminent as poets, legiſlators, ſound philoſophers, either natural or moral, genuine patriots and lovers of their country, and ſtrenuous aſſerters of the common rights of mankind, who have lived in the ſame country within the ſpace of about two hundred years; for all of them excepting Alfred, and Edward Prince of Wales, flouriſhed within that period.

Now I am in a humour for criticiſm, I cannot forbear making ſome obſervations upon *St. Auguſtine's cave.* This, my dear, is a ſmall ſquare thatched cottage, in a very retired part of the gardens. Its only ornaments are croſſes at the four corners, and at the top of the roof; and its only furniture are a ſtool and a bench. Upon the walls are inſcriptions in imitation of the old monkiſh rhimes. They are doubtleſs a happy imitation; but it is well for chaſte eyes and ears that they are in *Latin*; for they are as obſcene and indelicate as can well be conceived, even by an impure imagination. Without affecting the prude, Maria, I muſt acknowledge that I felt myſelf both diſappointed and diſguſted when I entered this cave. Surely the *temple of Venus*, or *Dido's cave*, might have been ſufficient for the purpoſe, had it been neceſſary to pay ſome reverence to the divinities of obſcenity; I think this hermitage might have been devoted to nobler uſes. Its humble

ble ſequeſtered appearance, naturally conveys to the mind, as you approach it, the ideas of a happy retirement, and of a pious poverty. And how eaſily might ſome pertinent inſcriptions within, have favored this idea! What an excellent uſe would the inimitable *Shenſtone*, that maſter of rural taſte, have made of this retired cot! How would he have led us to contemplate the life of ſome venerable ſage, who, having paſſed thro' the various turbulent ſcenes of life, ſought and *found* that reſt *here* which the *world* could not give! Perhaps, Maria, to a reflecting mind, nothing is more agreeable and ſoothing, than the melancholy pleaſure which the repreſentation of ſuch humble ſcenes has a tendency to inſpire. When we contemplate hoary age, happy and contented with the loweſt lot of life, how does it teach us, that all are mere *appendages*, which do not immediately proceed from *ourſelves*; only the *trappings* and not the *man!* Something in this ſtile is really wanting here. It would

have

have had a good effect by way of contraſt; and might have ſerved as a check to that gaiety and ſplendor, which reign perhaps too much through the gardens.

But what ideas do theſe obſcene rhimes convey? Nothing more than an impertinent ſatire upon an old monk, whoſe character, notwithſtanding all his foibles, deſerved not ſuch treatment. If abſolute lewdneſs had been the object of ſatire, why not rather in the perſon of ſome one much more profligate? Of an *Heliogabalus*, a *Nero*, or ſome other of the Roman emperors, whoſe hiſtory furniſhes examples in abundance? But the caſe I fear is this. St. *Auſtin*, like *David*, had a mixture of virtue and vice to a high degree in his character, and there is a ſtrange propenſity in minds of a certain complexion, to attack theſe mixt characters. St. *Auſtin* was a Father of the church, highly venerated by ſome on account of his ſanctity. He is ſaid alſo to have

have had ſome propenſions by the force of temperament, which all his principles and auſterities could not totally ſubdue. Is ſuch a one ſo proper an object of ſatire as the man who freely gives the reins to his luſts? Certainly not. But what, my friend, would be the genuine doctrine of this kind of ſatire, was it put into its proper language? It is this: A celebrated character has great vices; therefore he is as bad as thoſe who have nothing but vices: and if he is as bad as they, why then the conſequence is plain, they are as good as he!

The wits of the laſt age were much addicted to this kind of fallacious reaſoning. The moſt ſhining characters and favorite heroes of their ſtage, are perpetually introduced to run down hypocrites and hypocriſy, as if they were even *covetous of ſin*, and thought that every man, who was guilty of a crime but themſelves, was treading on *their* privileged ground. I readily grant, Maria, that a real hypocrite is fair game; but

but not for men of this complexion: nor are perſons who may be guilty of great improprieties, totally inconſiſtent with the general tenor of their profeſſion, always chargeable with the crime. Yet ſuppoſe they were, can any one by diſclaiming *hypocriſy* obtain a right to be *vicious?* Becauſe they hate deceit in a profeſſor of Chriſtianity, muſt they renounce its precepts? Nay, ſhall they ceaſe to be *men?* Or are they not guilty of a preſumption, as groſs as that of the men they ridicule, in claiming the title of *rational* creatures while they act *ir*rationally? — He that profeſſes to have ſome certain rule of conduct, let it be what it will, and yet lives in perpetual oppoſition to this rule, is as inconſiſtent and reprehenſible as the *religious* hypocrite: nay, he is equally a hypocrite, and a traitor to his principles.

THE large tract of ground we have had to run over, and the great variety of objects

jects which ſeemed to claim an equal right to our attention, render it impoſſible for me to be more particular; if I have not already treſpaſſed upon your patience. From the above general view and rough ſketch you will be able to form an idea of the beauty and grandeur of this charming place. The true claſſic elegance of ſome parts, the venerable grandeur of others, the general ſpirit and ſentiment which appear through the whole, diſplay at once the fine taſte and princely fortune of its projector; and they naturally ſuggeſt the following reflection, with which I will conclude this epiſtle.

How laudable was the choice and purſuit of the late *Lord Cobham*, who has thus raiſed a monument to himſelf by improving and encouraging the polite arts, by introducing a more refined taſte in gardening, and by giving bread to hundreds of the moſt deſerving part of mankind, the induſtrious poor, compared with the objects which too often

often abſorb the attention of men of wealth and faſhion, who ſquander their patrimony in riots, debaucheries, and gamings; whoſe profuſion is no other than making a transfer from the hands of one worthleſs wretch to thoſe of another; and who ſhare that fortune amongſt jockeys, ſharpers, pimps, bawds and infamous women, which might have rendered them happy, honourable, and uſeful members of ſociety! But wealth in the hands of a profligate ſpendthrift, is according to the full force of the expreſſion, *a prize put into the hands of a* FOOL!

Adieu.

LET-

LETTER X.

LEARNED LADIES.

Les femmes docteurs ne ſont point de mon goût.
Je conſens q'une femme ait des clartés en tout;
Mais je ne lui veux point la paſſion choquante,
De ſe rendre ſavante, aſinque d'être ſavante.

MOLIERE.

LETTER X.

Stow Gardens, July, 1769.

TO MARIA.

OUR London friends having juſt taken a ſip of rural joys, the morning after their arrival, departed the ſame evening for the metropolis. So valuable is time to thoſe deeply immerſed in the buſy cares of life! So unfortunate is it, that a diligent purſuit of the *means*, often deprives us of the opportunity of obtaining the *ends*, for which we ſeek thoſe means, *enjoyment!* The company Miſs H*** brought with her from Oxford, viz. her couſin Mr. Wilſon, and Meſſrs. James and Nichols, his fellow collegiates, ſtayed here

two days. They all appear to be very worthy characters. Mr. Wilſon particularly is not only a man of ſtirling ſenſe, but as far as may be collected from the tenor of his converſation, he ſeems to have imbibed the nobleſt ſentiments, and to poſſeſs the trueſt benevolence of heart. The manner in which we have employed this time will be the ſubject of the preſent, and a ſubſequent epiſtle or two.

After we had rambled over the gardens the whole of the morning, we returned to the inn to refreſh ourſelves. Towards the evening it was propoſed that we ſhould renew our walks. Mrs. P's attention to her children prevented her from being of the party; and Miſs E. choſe to bear her company. Fanny's volatile ſpirits could not brook the confinement; and tho' ſhe felt herſelf not a little fatigued already, yet ſhe was eaſily perſuaded to favour us with her company. This complaiſance was however the

the occaſion of her being involved in a diſpute with my friend Charles upon a very delicate ſubject, Maria, viz. whether *your* ſex hath an equal right to learn Latin and Greek with *ours*. As you may naturally imagine, Charles maintained the *negative*, and Fanny ſupported the *affirmative*.

In the courſe of our peregrinations, we accidentally came to the *Imperial cloſet*. This, my dear, is a ſmall ſquare pavilion, ſituated in a corner of the garden, towards the north-eaſt. It hath its name from being dedicated to the memory of thoſe ornaments of their ſpecies, the Roman emperors, *Titus Veſpaſian*, *Trajan* and *Antoninus*. It is adorned with a painting of each, and under theſe paintings is an inſcription which refers to ſome remarkable ſaying or occurrence of their lives. That of *Titus* has *diem perdidi*; 'I have loſt a day.' This, you know, is an expreſſion he is ſaid to have uttered, upon the recollection of a

day that had not been marked with any act of beneficence or utility. Under the portrait of *Trajan* is *pro me, ſi meriar, in me:* 'For or againſt me, as I deſerve;' referring to the ſword which he put into the hand of an officer whom he had appointed to a certain dignity. Under that of *Antoninus* is inſcribed the maxim by which he ſeemed invariably to have regulated his conduct, *Ita regnes imperator, ut privatus regi velis.* 'Govern as you would wiſh to be governed.'

THESE inſcriptions attracted our young lady's attention, and ſhe deſired Charles to interpret them. Charles was in a mood for croſs purpoſes, and inſtead of giving their literal meaning, he tranſlated as follows; *Diem perdidi,* 'we have been loſing time, Fanny.' *Pro me, &c.* 'treat me as I deſerve, Miſs.' *Ita regnes, &c.* 'Behave to the *ſuitor*, as you would wiſh the *huſband* to behave to you.'

PSHA,

PSHA! my friend Buncle will not treat me in this manner. Do, tell me, Mr. Buncle, what is the true meaning of that odious *Latin*.

I ANSWERED, that her interpreter had not only given the general ſenſe, but even added ſpirit to the original.

SHE immediately began to expatiate upon the tyranny of our ſex, who purpoſely keep as much knowledge as poſſible to themſelves, in order to triumph over her's. She did not forget to quote the fable of the lion upon this occaſion; and ſhe gave it as her firm opinion, that a female genius would ſhew itſelf equal, if not ſuperior to that of the other ſex, were not the ſevereſt reſtraints laid upon their education.

WHENCE comes it, ſays Charles, that this ſuperior genius of yours does not burſt

through ſuch reſtraints? Do you think, Fanny, that a whole race of *boys* dreſſed in petticoats, and ſent to governantes with a needle and thread-paper in their hands, would reſt contented all their lives with making caps and ruffles, or adjuſting the bows of a ribband?

FANNY ſtill alledged that her's was the weaker and more delicate ſex, unhappily born to ſubjection, and of conſequence doomed to receive ſuch an education as their lords and maſters were pleaſed to give. But, ſays ſhe, this has no connection with the powers and faculties of the mind: They may be equally ſtrong, perhaps ſtronger in a delicate conſtitution than in a giant! She further ſupported her hypotheſis by the example of *Madame Dacier*, *Lady Wortley Mountague*, *Mrs. Rowe*, the learned ladies of whom my father, of bleſſed memory, has given ſuch rapturous accounts, and many others who have diſcovered even maſculine talents! So

So much the worſe, ſays Charles; for it is a fact well known, that learned ladies are too apt to loſe more than they gain by their erudition.

How ſo?

Why they are generally more intolerable by their pride, and even contempt of their own ſex, than amiable by *ſuch* a culture of their underſtanding. In fact, I am of Mr. *Duncombe's* opinion, when he ſays,

And huſbands oft experience to their coſt,
The prudent *houſewife* in the *ſcholar* loſt.

Perhaps, ſays Miſs H***, the reaſon of your adopting thoſe ſentiments may be given in the preceding lines which you forget to quote.

Nor mean I here to blame that father's care,
Who guards from learned wives their *booby* heir;
Since oft that heir, with prudence, has been known,
To dread a genius that tranſcends his own.

It is poſſible, ſays Charles, this may be my caſe; but I aſſure you, Fanny, that if you were a learned lady, I ſhould hate you.

I SUPPOSE I ſhould love myſelf the better, and that would make *ſome* amends Mr. ****.

FOR a female, continues Charles, to ſtudy *Latin*, *Greek*, and *Hebrew*; to turn critick and commentator upon the learned labors of others! Why, girl, ſhe may as well ſtalk about in jack-boots, trample upon all the aprons and petticoats ſhe meets with in her way, and ſmack her horſewhip at every d—d ſcoundrel that affronts her!

FANNY finding that her application to me had been fruitleſs, turned to her couſin *Wilſon* to reſcue her from *the ill manners of that brute*; and ſhe aſked his opinion of the queſtion in debate.

MR.

Mr. *Wilſon*, who is a man of true moderation, anſwered her that his thoughts upon that queſtion were much the ſame as upon many other ſubjects of controverſy: in which each party generally forgetting to draw a line, and inveſtigate the truths which lie on each ſide of it, content themſelves with perpetual ſallies and ſkirmiſhes of random argument. I think, Miſs, ſays he, you are both in the right, and both in the wrong.

This required an explanation.

Your friend, adds Mr. *Wilſon*, carries his truths to ſuch an extravagant length, that they begin to change their nature. He cannot mean to inſinuate that the minds of your ſex ſhould lye barren and uncultivated; but you muſt allow, Miſs, that all kinds of cultivation are not equally proper?

THAT, ſays ſhe, muſt depend, as in your ſex, upon the genius of the party, or ſome determining circumſtance of life.

THUS far, he anſwered, we are perfectly agreed; though our concluſions will ſomewhat differ.

PLEASE to make this appear.

YOU will acknowledge with me, Miſs, that nature has given to each ſex a particular characteriſtic, beſt adapted to the offices they are to fulfil in life?

ALLOWED.

THAT the female ſex are more feeble and delicate in their bodily frame?

AND you think this the caſe with our minds?

NAY,

NAY, hear my argument out, and if it does not do you juſtice, I will give you leave to complain.

WELL, then proceed.

I WAS going to obſerve, that the very frame and contexture of your bodies, and the prevailing turn of your minds, plainly indicate the ſphere of life in which you are deſtined to move. To *you* are allotted the more paſſive, to *us* the more active virtues: To *you* are aſſigned the domeſtic duties, where the *heart* is more immediately concerned; to *us* thoſe cares and labors which particularly require the *hand* and *head*. *You* are deſtined by nature to manage the internal affairs of the family, to ſuperintend the young infant, to ſolace the cares and anxieties of your huſband; and *we* are deſtined to ſeek and provide the means for your ſupport. Theſe domeſtic offices are beſt

beſt conducted by that natural ſoftneſs and tender ſympathy, which are the brighteſt ornaments of your ſex. In a word, the ſtudies and accompliſhments of *men*, ought in general to be ſuch as recommend them to the *world*; thoſe of women ſuch as render them the moſt amiable within *the walls of their own habitations.*

But, Sir, are not thoſe ladies who are fortunately circumſtanced, and who have leiſure upon their hands, at equal liberty with gentlemen, in the ſame circumſtances, to proſecute what ſtudies they pleaſe?

I ſay not, Miſs, that there is an abſolute law of *nature* againſt it, but I muſt think that there is a law of *propriety*. Men have an equal right to ſit with a netting-needle at their leiſure hours, or amuſe themſelves with tambour work, but the whole world would exclaim againſt our effeminacy

effeminacy were we to prefer ſuch amuſements.

SIR, the caſes are by no means parallel. It is an honor to us to aſpire after the higheſt excellencies; and it would be a diſgrace to you to ſet yourſelves down to thoſe trifling employments which are ſcarcely pardonable in *our* ſex.

I ONLY meant it as illuſtrative of the law of *right:* but I perceive, ſays Mr. *Wilſon*, that your ideas are already growing too maſculine. Thoſe elegant employments are not only pardonable but highly commendable in you. They have a tendency to improve the taſte and enliven the fancy. Such amuſements alleviate the mind, after more homely employments; nay, they render home agreeable, and thus take away the diſpoſition for more dangerous and expenſive pleaſures. They render a female's ornaments truly *her own*. She does not ſit like

like an inſipid image, bedecked with the productions of *another's* taſte and invention, where perſonal merit has not the leaſt concern; but ſhe wears her ornaments as the elegant ſamples of *her own* ſkill and ingenuity!

You ſpeak alſo of aſpiring after the higheſt excellencies. This in my humble opinion will lead you to purſue ſuch accompliſhments as beſt correſpond with your characters and ſtation. Paſs not the line which nature has drawn, but cultivate your own good qualities as much as you pleaſe within that line.

And pray, Sir, what are theſe?

Why, Madam, my ſentiments are, that the more delicate ſtate of your frame is in general attended with a more delicate ſtate of ſoul. Your ſex is endowed with a more natural vivacity, a more pleaſing fancy, and a more refined feeling: and I would earneſtly

earneſtly recommend thoſe accompliſhments which are calculated to heighten and improve theſe qualities. To the works of ingenuity and art mentioned before, we may add drawing, painting, ſhell-work, &c. muſic, well ſelected poetry, ſuch a competent knowledge of hiſtory and philoſophy as hath a natural tendency to improve and elevate the mind, as ſhall enable you to enjoy a learned converſation, and more particularly teach you to feel and admire the wiſdom of the Almighty, as it is manifeſted both in the natural and moral world; and that ſpecies of writing which is truly ſentimental, which is dictated by a mind highly cultivated, that touches the finer ſprings of the ſoul, raiſes you above the little partialities and prejudices of your ſex, inſpires you with delicate ſentiments of honor, and awakens in you every friendly and benevolent diſpoſition. Theſe will carry you to a perfection that will make you the delight and admiration

of

of our ſex, and the *envy of your own*: they will form you for the agreeable, amuſing, inſtructive companion, the amiable and compaſſionate friend.

ALL this is mighty fine, Sir; but may we not go farther if we pleaſe?

I REALLY think, Miſs, that a proper attention to theſe will occupy ſo much of your time, connected with the neceſſary concerns and avocations of life, that you will not have leiſure to purſue ſeverer ſtudies: and I am ſure they will do you more real honor, than if you were able to read *Pliny*, comment upon *Heroditus*, ſolve the hardeſt problem in *Euclid*, calculate eclipſes with *Newton*, repeat *Homer* by heart, or make *Greek* verſes equally good.

So then you will not allow the ladies to apply themſelves to the abſtruſer ſciences?

'TIS

'Tis not for us, anſwered *Wilſon*, to ſet bounds to a particular genius and turn of mind. True genius is a mighty torrent that bears down all oppoſition: it comes from Heaven, and brings credentials with it, which no man can diſpute! But I would no more wiſh that ſuch rare inſtances ſhould be propoſed as examples of imitation, than that the regular planets ſhould forſake their orbs, and run after a wild excentric comet!

Fanny was ſcarcely ſatisfied with this ingenuous conceſſion. She ſtill perſiſted that we wanted her ſex to ſhine in leſſer accompliſhments only. You moſt charitably wiſh us, ſays ſhe, to improve our *hearts* rather than our *heads*: and would make us good-natured play-things for your lordſhips to amuſe yourſelves with: But I ſee your drift. You wiſh to remain unrivalled in thoſe ſciences which indicate the depth of the mental powers; which diſplay the intellectual faculties of man, and aſſimulate him

him to beings of a ſuperior order? But let me tell you, Sir, that as ſome towering ſpirits amongſt us have broken through thoſe invidious reſtraints, I hope numbers will follow them, and make you aſhamed of that lurking Mahometan creed, which more of you entertain than profeſs.

It is to be hoped they will not, Miſs, for I muſt doubt with your friend, whether they be not in danger of loſing much more than they will gain by theſe learned occupations. Proficiency in any ſcience can only be the reſult of much ſevere application and ſtudy; perhaps more than a female's conſtitution or diſpoſition can bear: and ſhe will be in danger of ſacrificing her health, ſpirits, and temper, for acquiſitions which are not of half their value! To make this progreſs in the abſtruſer ſciences, or a critical proficiency in almoſt any, a lady muſt not only neglect her domeſtic concerns, but alſo thoſe feminine

ac-

accompliſhments which alone can render her truly amiable. She is likewiſe in great danger of being moſt intolerably proud and ſelf-conſequential. If ſhe ſtoop to the concerns of her family, it is rather out of an affected condeſcenſion than from a delight to move in her proper ſphere: and the conſequence is that her domeſtic duties are but ſuperficially performed, or they become a heavy burden. She will alſo be diſpoſed to hold her own ſex in ſovereign contempt, to aſſociate with the learned of ours, and it is well if ſhe do not acquire ſuch a maſculine air, as is diſpleaſing to both.

But does not true learning, ſays Fanny, improve the mind, and teach us how to conduct ourſelves in the various relations of life? Is it not probable that the more we know, the more valuable members of ſociety we ſhall become?

LEARNING is ſo vague a term, that it would not be poſſible to give a full anſwer to the queſtion, without the kind and degree of learning be ſpecified. I have already ſketched out that ſpecies of learning which I believe will have the effect you propoſe; and I have mentioned my objections to your deeply inveſtigating the abſtruſer ſciences. I will only remark further, that it is very poſſible for a large collection of knowledge to pervert the mind. It may furniſh the memory, and you may have much to ſay upon every topic of converſation; but it is apt to embarras and miſlead the judgment; whereas, *improved natural ſenſe* and *a taſte refined* cannot pervert. A *learned* wife may be, nay the chance is, that ſhe will be a bad one; but there is little danger from a *ſenſible* woman.

I DO not rightly underſtand your diſtinction?

It is obvious, learning refers meerly to the ſentiments and actions of *others*, as articles of memory: improved ſenſe refers to the proper and natural relation of *things*. The one is ſimilar to the province of a botaniſt, who explores every herb of the field, and can tell you its genus, ſpecies, &c. but whoſe whole knowledge reſts here: the other repreſents the more ſkilful *bee* that extracts *ſweets* from every flower it explores. The ſentiments and actions of others may miſlead us; but a juſt diſcernment of the relations of things always puts it in our power, and moſtly diſpoſes us to act right.

But is not *your own* ſex in a ſimilar predicament?

Not altogether. When our ſex purſue learning, it is as their proper employment, by which they are to recommend themſelves to the world. They do not therefore

fore neglect other concerns which more pertinently belong to them. I will not ſay, nor do I think with Dr. *Swift*, that after all the pains you may be at, you can never arrive in point of learning, to the perfection of a *ſchool-boy*; yet this I will aſſert, that the man who makes ſuch a proficiency as would render any woman vain, will yet be conſcious of his own ignorance, compared with the advances of his brethren. This will have a tendency to keep him humble. I alſo believe that learned diſquiſitions have the ſame effect upon him, as elegant accompliſhments have upon you; that they improve his taſte, employ thoſe hours which might have been ſpent to worſe purpoſes, and render him ſuperior to the little dirty purſuits of uncultivated minds! They improve his reaſoning powers; and perhaps, Miſs, a man ſeldom acts well *without reaſoning* upon a ſubject, a woman ſeldom well *with*.

CHARLES ſmiled.—Fanny called eagerly for an explanation.—Mr. *Wilſon* ſeemed inclined to indulge her, but he was interrupted by a meſſenger informing us, that Mr. B*** was juſt arrived from *Buckingham*.

Adieu.

J. B.

P. S. Mr. B*** called to give us an invitation to *Buckingham*. We are all to ſpend another day in the gardens, and on *Wedneſday* we ſhall dine with him. Mr. *Wilſon* and his companions have agreed to be of the party; and they are to proceed from thence to *Oxford* in the evening.

LETTER XI.

LOVE to RAKES.

Were you ye fair, but cautious whom ye truſt,
Did you but think how ſeldom FOOLS are juſt;
So many of your ſex would ne'er in vain,
Of broken vows, and faithleſs loves complain.

ROWE.

LETTER XI.

Stow Gardens, Tueſday, July, 1769.

WE wandered the next morning towards the two pavilions at the ſouth entrance of the gardens. The inſide of each is ornamented with a graceful painting, executed by *Nollikins.* The ſubjects are the fruitleſs loves of *Dorinda* and *Myrtillo* taken from the *paſtor fido of* Guarini. The inſpection of theſe paintings naturally drew from ſuch a mixt company, ſome general remarks upon love, upon conſtancy, cruelty, coquetry, till at length, by the natural turns and windings of converſation, that adage of Pope,

" Every woman is at heart a rake,"

more particularly fixed our attention.

TELL me, *Fanny*, ſays *Charles*, tell me honeſtly, the reaſon why ladies in general prefer men of diſſipated morals to the ſtrictly virtuous?

AND you think we *all* do?

I HOPE and believe not. Some of you we will exempt from the charge; though the number is but ſmall. Yet I ſuppoſe, Miſs, that you know the heart of Woman ſufficiently to explain the reaſon of this general taſte?

WHY then I'll tell you. It is natural for the ſexes to ſeek the company of each other; and were we ſo ſcrupulous as to make choice of the *ſtrictly virtuous* alone, I believe, Sir, we ſhould be obliged to lead the life of nunns.

YOUR obſervation is perhaps too juſt; but it does not ſufficiently explain the reaſon;

ſon; for you abſolutely make perſons of that character your choice. Nay, if there be a rake and a modeſt man in company, you will join with the rake to laugh the modeſt man out of countenance.

BE it ſo. And if Man, the Lord of the creation, has not courage enough to look a poor ſimple girl in the face, he deſerves to be laughed at!

THAT is, you deſpiſe him for reverencing you more than you deſerve. Yet ſurely this is not a greater fault, *Fanny*, than ſeeking to deſtroy the virtue and innocence of your ſex? Will you careſs the man who is upon the watch to *undo* you, rather than him who gives you credit for more excellencies than you poſſeſs?

BUT the man of gallantry, Sir, is ſo very aſſiduous to oblige,—ſo very polite,—ſo unreſtrained and *degagé* in his addreſs:

—When he makes love he ſighs ſo plaintively,—looks ſo lovingly,—proteſts ſo perſuaſively,—and ſqueezes our hand ſo tenderly, that he beſets all our ſenſes at once; and what can a poor laſs do but love again? Whilſt your modeſt man, on the other hand, is paring his nails—picking his noſtrils—looking on this ſide—on the other, above, or below the object of his flame;—how is it poſſible for him to wound her heart?

THANK you, young lady, I really believe you have diſcovered the myſtery. Nature has formed your ſex, perhaps contrary to your inclinations, to take the *defenſive* part. You wait impatiently for an attack; and you wiſh to be attacked with vigour, that it may be in your own power either to hold the beſieger at defiance, or to ſurrender at will. But let me tell you, Madam, you often ſurrender where no real ſiege was intended. In fact, both theſe perſonages are acting equally out of character. The

modeſt

modeſt man really *feels* what the other has learned the art to expreſs without feeling. The rake repeats his tender tales of love ſo often as to acquire a boldneſs in the repetition, which in this caſe deſtroys their merit, and ought to deſtroy all their influence. For whilſt you fondly dream that you have inſpired him with the tendereſt ſentiments, you are in fact merely witneſſes to a rehearſal of what he has diſplayed before dozens of your ſex, and will diſplay to as many dozens more!

But don't you think, Sir, ſays the young lady, ſeriouſly, that there may be ſome truth in the maxim, *a reformed rake makes the beſt huſband?*

Upon what do you found this ſuppoſition?

Why perſons of ſuch a character are moſtly well bred and polite. Their love

of the ſex has induced them to acquire thoſe graces which never fail to pleaſe. They have in general ſeen much of life; they know the world, and this renders them agreeable companions. They are perſons of lively, active ſpirits: perhaps it were theſe which impelled them into unjuſtifiable exceſſes. But when they have corrected their exceſſes, reformed their extravagances, and commenced ſober, regular huſbands, may they not ſtill retain thoſe accompliſhments which rendered them ſo acceptable, and which are ſeldom to be found elſewhere?

The converſation now became general. We all made our obſervations upon the queſtion, which, if I could recollect them, it would be too tedious to repeat. I ſhall ſelect therefore thoſe of her couſin, Mr. *Wilſon*, to whoſe worthy principles, I have already paid the encomiums which are due.

YOUR defence, Madam, ſays *Wilſon*, is a very ingenious one, and every rake muſt have the complaiſance to thank you for it. Yet allow me a few moments to point out its fallacy. It is readily acknowledged, that a polite and aſſiduous attention is due from our ſex to yours. This is eſſential to the character of a gentleman: it gives a reliſh to ſocial life, and conſtitutes one of its higheſt amuſements; and I could heartily wiſh that men of virtue and ſenſe would cultivate it more: if they did, I am perſuaded that the worthy part of your ſex, would always give them the preference. Yet on the other hand, you ought to be warned not to truſt to theſe ſpecious appearances. Your friend's obſervation is certainly true. A *libertine* muſt be *inſincere*. He profeſſes to thouſands that paſſion only to be entertained for *one*, that reverence and eſteem which a libertine entertains for *no one* of your ſex. For let me tell you a truth, humiliating as it is,

to a man, they deſpiſe you. Fortune has thrown me too much amongſt this claſs of people, and I aſſure you the indecent freedoms they take with your characters in *private*, can only be equalled by their perſonal flatteries. This is eaſily explained. They are accuſtomed to aſſociate with the moſt abandoned of your ſex, until they have loſt every idea of female virtue. From theſe they form their opinion of the ſex at large. It is here they think they have obtained a knowledge of your *ſecret* hiſtory, and *real* character. In more virtuous companies, they are glad to find that their inſinuating arts, their indelicate alluſions, and *doubles entendres*, meet with as much approbation as you *dare* beſtow. This reception confirms the ſentiments firſt imbibed in the ſchools of proſtitutes. Conſcious to themſelves alſo, that their own characters are ſuch as no virtuous woman *ought* to eſteem, they contemn you for every mark of complacency you beſtow.

PLACE

PLACE this character, young lady, in oppoſition to the man of *principle*, genteelly educated, who has always aſſociated with amiable and worthy women! He is deſirous of pleaſing them, becauſe he thinks they have a *right* to be pleaſed. He is ſolicitous to obtain their favourable opinion, becauſe he thinks it a *real honour*. The natural attachment of the ſexes is to him a ſource of the pureſt delight, and refines itſelf into a more delicate ſpecies of friendſhip. He is glad to oblige, becauſe he loves and reſpects you. If he does not launch out perpetually into diffuſe and unmeaning flattery, it is becauſe he either reveres the truth too much, or he pays a more genuine compliment to your good ſenſe; knowing a woman of true delicacy will not bear to be groſly flattered. But you have this conſolation, he is *ſincere* in thoſe expreſſions of praiſe, which the opinion of your excellency will ſometimes extort from him; and he certainly offers you the

the more *valuable* incenſe, tho' it may not be ſo *frequently* preſented.

But I will acknowledge that the impetuoſity of paſſion, or the force of evil example, may, in early youth, impel or ſeduce perſons of the beſt education, of the moſt promiſing genius and diſpoſition, far beyond the line of reaſon and virtue: and that the agreeable wildneſs of their conduct, and their ſprightly ſallies, will render, to an undiſtinguiſhing mind, their *very vices* pleaſing. I will acknowledge, that ſuch a one may reform: that his good ſenſe and right principles may enable him to reclaim his errors; and that he may obſerve, with a ſcrupulous exactneſs, all the duties of the ſocial and conjugal ſtate. Nay, there may be ſome very ſingular inſtances, in which the experience a man has acquired by his follies, will have made him wiſer and better than if he had eſcaped them. Yet theſe inſtances are ſo very rare, that they ought not to be produced as proofs of your poſition.

ſition. Muſt not the keen, delicate edge of virtue be, generally ſpeaking, blunted by habitual vice? Is it likely that the man who hath long aſſociated with perſons of the moſt abandoned principles, will, when he *forſakes* their company, reſume *all* that purity and ſublimity of ſentiment, which he was obliged to lay aſide in the courſe of his commerce with them?—I ſhould greatly doubt alſo, whether the future days of the perſon we are animadverting upon, can be ſo happy in themſelves, and conſequently to his conſort, as if he had never deviated into vice. The remorſe which a ſenſible heart muſt feel, at the injuries committed in the moments of thoughtleſſneſs and paſſion, injuries irreparable to the virtue and happineſs of families, will ſurely caſt a damp over all the joys of his future years: muſt leave a ſtain upon his mind which the bittereſt tears of repentance will never waſh away! How then can his hours paſs ſo chearily as thoſe of conſcious uniform innocence?

You

You ſay, Miſs, they are generally perſons of lively, active ſpirits. I will ſuppoſe yet more, that they poſſeſs all the wit and vivacity of a *Congreve* or a *Rocheſter*. But in what conſiſts the wit of a libertine? I may ſay in *obſcenity* or *irreligion*; in *doubles entendres*, which a woman of decency dares not allow herſelf to ſmile at, or in profane jeſts, which a woman of principle muſt abhor! Theſe are the ſubjects which have ſo habitually exerciſed their talents, that their briſker thoughts cannot eaſily flow into any other channel. Deprive them of theſe topics, and, as men of wit, you will often render them ſilent. A lady therefore cannot expect from a rake *reformed*, that wit and humor which appeared ſo agreeable in the *un*reformed.

HITHERTO, continues *Wilſon*, I have given your hypotheſis every advantage you could wiſh, and yet you ſee how ill it

is,

is founded. But let us enquire a little into the character of a Rake as we generally find it; and then you will be convinced, *Fanny*, how totally unworthy they be to engage the affections, or receive the hand of a woman of virtue and ſenſe. They are a ſet of contemptible wretches, whom ill-judging parents have ſupported in diſſipation and extravagance, at that moſt important and critical period, when youth is forming into manhood; who are eagerly contracting habits of vice, at a time they ought to be drinking in every *noble* principle and virtuous affection: and thus are they preparing themſelves for becoming future nuiſances, inſtead of worthy members of ſociety. They accordingly launch into public life, without a ſingle qualification to ſet them above the contempt of every ſenſible mind. They ſet up for men of conſequence, without any one quality that is entitled to reſpect. Having exerciſed an uncontrouled ſway over the minions of their

their illicit pleaſures, they fooliſhly think, that the whole world was made for them, and carry their overbearing inſolence into the moſt reſpectable companies. Becauſe all the principles of religion are againſt them; it is likely that they will ſet themſelves againſt religion; commence *free-thinkers* perhaps, and inſinuate trite objections to the bible, without knowing its contents! Oaths and imprecations conſtitute the whole force of their language; nay, take theſe away, and there would ſcarcely be any language left. Their ideas of ſocial pleaſure, chiefly conſiſt in joining in a loud laugh, or roaring out till midnight an idle, unmeaning, or obſcene ſong! They pretend to be men of paſſion, and are guilty of a thouſand childiſh exceſſes to convince the world that they have ſpirit and feeling; when it may be juſtly ſuſpected that they run into every *groſſer* indulgence, becauſe their *dull* feelings are not to be awakened by any other. Their courage it-

ſelf,

ſelf, which perhaps is the only ſhadow of virtue they have any claim to, is perverted into an outrageous vice; and inſtead of being employed in the protection of innocence or in their country's cauſe, is proſtituted to the revenging an idle quarrel, or committing murder for an inſignificant punctilio! Deſirable huſbands truly, delightful companions of every hour to a woman of education, character, and ſentiment! Tell me, *Fanny*, what kind of reformation can be expected from a creature like this? It is impoſſible he ſhould reform from *principle*, for he has no principles for reaſon and reflection to lay hold of. Marriage to an *angel* could not reclaim him, for he is inſenſible to thoſe mental charms, which are alone able to captivate a man of underſtanding. He is habituated to conſider every female equally as *woman*, and he may be enamoured of his wife as he was of his miſtreſs, becauſe ſhe is novel. But nothing further can be reaſonably expected.

Accuſ-

Accuſtomed to rove about without controul, and excite his languid paſſions by variety, the ſameneſs of perſon will ſoon pall upon his vitiated appetite.

But honor you ſay will keep him conſtant.—Alas he knows it not. He has baſely proſtituted his honor already. If the ſtrongeſt and moſt ſolemn proteſtations, joined perhaps with a ſomething like affectation, did not keep him conſtant in his early amours, if he did not ſcruple to deſtroy innocence, and diffuſe infamy and wretchedneſs over a whole family for a paſſing gratification, how little is to be expected from him now he is hardened in guilt, has broken through every reſtraint of humanity, and is loſt to every delicate principle! Truſt me, *Fanny*, all the hopes of his conſtancy muſt be founded upon his feeling the ill conſequences of his vices, rather than from a conviction of their evil! The beſt you have to hope is that, exhauſted

exhauſted with debaucheries, he will quietly ſeek his repoſe in the arms of his nurſe. It is eaſy to gueſs the ſecret motions which induce many of your ſex to marry a rake; but it is as rational to expect that combuſtibles will burn with increaſed ardor, for having frequently taken fire, as that a man ſhall love his wife with greater warmth of paſſion, for having ſpent the force of his temperament amongſt courtezans. I will confeſs, it has often moved my indignation and pity, to obſerve ſo many of your ſex ſo contentedly take up with the leavings of a brothel:—and, whilſt girls of the moſt infamous character have been the companions of their *youth*, and ſeen the *beſt* of their days, that thoſe who call themſelves *virtuous* ſhould receive them without ſcruple as the partners of their lives. Nor can I reconcile it to the idea of a good and virtuous character, for a woman to accept of, much leſs give the preference to a man, who has been a greater detriment to the public

public than a tyger let looſe: who has ſpread wretchedneſs over numbers of innocent families, and violated thoſe tender tyes of *parent*, *friend*, and *child!* Let her look forwards, and contemplate her own offſpring as the victims of irregular paſſions, and herſelf borne down with the weight of the ignominy, and ſurely it will be impoſſible for her to love this character, or wiſh to aſſociate herſelf with it in the cloſeſt of all connections!

Miss H*** ſeemed to attend to this diſcourſe with the utmoſt ſatisfaction and pleaſure: and ſhe ſays, ſmiling to Charles, I perceive, Sir, you have retained counſellor Wilſon to be your advocate.—He is a very able one, I aſſure you.

My friend, who can parry a ſtroke of ſatire as well as moſt men, received this delicate compliment but awkwardly; and he was himſelf a proof of his doctrine, that a virtuous man in love often *feels*, what the oppoſite character will ſometimes beſt *expreſs*. Adieu.

LET-

LETTER XII.

SEDUCTION.

If a flame all diſhoneſt be vilely profeſs'd,
  Through tenderneſs muſt I incline,
And ſeek to indulge the repoſe of a breaſt
  That would plant endleſs tortures in mine?

LIBERTINE RECLAIMED.

LETTER XII.

Stow Gardens, July, 1769.

ON Wedneſday our party, according to agreement, dined with Mr. B**, at Buckingham. I could wiſh you were acquainted with this cordial and worthy couple. They ſeem to be compoſed of benevolence and hoſpitality. How eaſy is it, Maria, to diſtinguiſh between the genuine effuſions of a warm and generous heart, and that affectation of eaſe which has ſomething forbidding in it, and which frequently betrays a ſenſe of ſuperiority, by the care that is taken by the party to make you admire their condeſcention! How poſſible is it to be a gentleman, even without making a handſome

bow, or truely polite without fine ſpeeches! Theſe people ſeem all *heart*; and as they lay their whole ſouls bare at once, vows and proteſtations of *raptures*, of *infinite ſatisfaction*, for the honor you do them in eating a bit of chicken at their table, are entirely ſuperfluous!

Our meal was ſimple and elegant. It was peculiarly pleaſing to me, as it indicated the wealth of the *place* rather than of the *purſe*. It ſeemed to render *affluence* unneceſſary, by exhibiting dainties at firſt hand, which the purſe muſt have purchaſed at a high intereſt. Mr. B** takes great delight in his garden, which is ſufficiently ample, in good order, and well ſtocked with a rich variety of fruits and vegetables. The lady of the manſion ſuperintends the poultry and dairy. From theſe ſources it is that they ſupply an hoſpitable, and even *ſplendid* table for their welcome gueſts.

I AM debarred, by the promiſe I made you, from giving a minute deſcription of our feſtal board; yet I may lawfully introduce our *Hebé* to your acquaintance.

THE ſervant that waited upon us at table, was a clean, pretty, delicate, country laſs. Neatneſs and ſimplicity were her apparel, her ornaments were innocence and modeſty: and on my word, Maria, ſhe appeared more graceful than many a ducheſs at a birth night! How ſuperior, oh nature are *thy* embelliſhments, to the little contrivances of art; to the vain conceits and whimſical inventions of whimſical mortals!

I WAS pleaſing myſelf with the proſpect of happineſs this young creature probably enjoyed, beyond perſons in a more elevated ſtation. I hoped that, at ſuch a diſtance from the ſeat of ſeduction, ſhe might eſcape thoſe ſnares which abandoned men lay to deſtroy humble and dependant beauty.

Her agreeable perſon and artleſs manners, thought I, will probably engage the heart of ſome honeſt Ruſtic, with whom ſhe may live happier in the dowry of mutual affection, than legal proſtitutes with all their abundance! It really grieved me to learn, however, that this young creature was infected with that baneful diſeaſe, more fatal than the plague, a curioſity to ſee the town. She had conceived the idea, like many other inexperienced girls, that the CITY is a place where all are gay, rich, and happy; and where large wages, numerous vails, and their miſtreſs's clothes, exalt every ſervant to the appearance, and almoſt to the rank of a lady. We attempted to undeceive the girl: we repreſented to her the ineligible ſituation of moſt ſervants in London; that they burrowed under ground, breathed a cloſe, unwholſome air, and were inevitably doomed to live in darkneſs and filth, deprived of thoſe pleaſures

a rural

a rural ſituation naturally affords, without being in a ſtate to enjoy thoſe peculiar to the place. We warned her that ſhe would be ſecluded from almoſt every *innocent* amuſement, and enticed by every *guilty* one. We hinted the danger to which her unprotected beauty would be particularly expoſed. She reſented our admonitions, which ſuggeſted apprehenſions ſo much to her diſhonor: and ſhe ſupported her reſolutions, by citing a few ſcattered inſtances of the remarkably fortunate, whom ſhe conſidered as vouchers for her own ſucceſs.

After the girl had quitted the room, I could not forbear lamenting to the company, that a perſon to all appearance ſo well diſpoſed and ſo void of art, ſhould indulge a curioſity that may prove her ruin! Who knows, ſaid I, but that this innocent creature, whoſe ſenſibility will ſcarcely allow us to ſuggeſt a hint which reſpects her virtue; who ſhrinks like the ſenſative plant,

from the approach of an idea that might ſully her reputation, will in the ſpace of a few months, fall into the hands of ſome vile ſeducer, loſe her innocence, that richeſt treaſure, and degenerate into the moſt inſolent, indecent, and abandoned of her ſex!

'TIS true, ſays Mr. B***, there are too many inſtances of a ſimilar nature which authoriſe your apprehenſions. But while we pity them, it is impoſſible to think of the guilt of their betrayers without horror and indignation.

'ALTHOUGH ſeduction is ſcarcely admitted into the liſt of crimes' by the polite world, yet in my opinion it is a vice, productive of more horrid conſequences, and hightened by more circumſtances of aggravation, than any one perhaps in the black catalogue. For is there a crime in which all the principles of honor, honeſty, and humanity, are ſo ſhamefully violated?

What

What can be more *unjuſt* than to deſire a gratification, to the *ruin* of the object that beſtows it? What can be more *cruel* than to deſtroy the peace of an innocent, it may be of an hoſpitable and benevolent family;—than to contaminate a ſpotleſs ſoul;—to expoſe to laſting infamy and perdition, one, who might have ſuſtained an *honorable* ſtation in life;—and to reduce to a public nuiſance, the moſt amiable part of our ſpecies? And what can be more *baſe* than to make *love*, that noble paſſion! to make a generous affection and unbounded confidence in a man's *honor*, the ſource of all theſe miſeries?—to prey upon the *tenderneſs* and *humanity* of the ſex to their deſtruction? This is, adds our worthy friend, his cheeks glowing with honeſt indignation, this is without exaggerating, worſe than *brutal* cruelty.—It is true, the hungry Lion will devour the lovely and inoffenſive lamb, but they are of a *different ſpecies*; the fierce Tyger may ſpring upon the unwary travel-

ler, but he was a *ſtranger*; familiarity and kindneſs might have ſubdued *his* ſavage nature: the Crocodile will deſtroy thoſe whom his hypocritical tears have deceived, but even *he* does not make *love* the maſk of his cruelty: he never ſwore fidelity, nor does he ſeek to obtain a confidential affection, in order to accompliſh his plan of deſtruction. It is peculiar to Man, to *civilized* and *accompliſhed* man, to the *fine gentleman*, to proſtitute honor and conſcience, to ſacrifice the nobleſt feelings of his nature, in order to indulge a brutal appetite!

Let them not plead *paſſion* as their excuſe, for where there is a genuine paſſion, there will be affection; and where there is affection there cannot be cruelty. Profeſſed Rovers betray a *want* of paſſion, or they would not require freſh objects to excite it. Yet be it ſo;—what a deſpicable ſlave to his luſts is that wretch, who wreſtles with every *honeſt principle*, and every *humane feeling*

ing in order to gratify them! He ought to be baniſhed from the ſociety of *men*, and made to herd amongſt *goats* and *ſatyrs!*

Is it a principle of *vanity* that prompts them to ſo much miſchief? Of what mighty atchievements have they to boaſt? They may be able to debauch the mind of many a young credulous female, without any pretentions to beauty, wit, or courage. The low arts of lying, hypocriſy, aſſiduous flattery, and watching every unguarded moment, are the only qualifications requiſite. The *highwayman* may boaſt of *heroiſm*, even the lurking *thief* and mighty *aſſaſſin* lay ſome claim to *courage:* they are expoſed to dangers from reſiſtance, and ſuffer ignominious puniſhments if detected. But where is the fortitude of betraying an artleſs girl, and violating the chaſtity of an unwary female, formed by the ſoftneſs of her nature to compaſſion, and left *unrevenged*, as

ſhe was *unprotected* by any other law than thoſe of honor and humanity!'

THESE noble ſentiments were expreſſed in a manner which indicated Mr. B*** to be peculiarly affected by the ſubject; and ſo indeed he was; with how much juſtice the following narrative will explain.

'I WAS once intimate, ſaid he, with a very worthy family, rather above the common rank in the village of D*****, which is but a few miles diſtant from *Buckingham.* They thought themſelves bleſſed with a daughter, their only child, of whom they were dotingly fond.—Every pleaſing, every anxious thought was about the welfare of their Nancy; for ſo their child was called. The natural ſweetneſs of her temper, and her amiable and dutiful deportment towards her parents, were the beſt apologies for the extravagance of their affection. The charms of her perſon were

not

not inferior to her other excellent qualities. She was the envy of her own ſex, the admiration of ours, and gained the heart of many a neighbouring youth.

One of thoſe Miſcreants whom providence has *curſed* with a fortune, in whom the refinements of faſhionable life have poliſhed away every ſentiment of virtue and humanity; who value themſelves, not by any ſcale of utility to the public, but in proportion to the numbers they have ruined, and the difficulties they have ſurmounted in accompliſhing their horrid purpoſes;—One of theſe deſtroyers was prowling about as uſual in ſearch of his prey. He happened to ſee *Nancy* as he was riding through the village. He was ſtruck with her appearance, and enquiring about her at the inn, he became enamoured of her character. He exulted in the fortunate diſcovery, and meditated her ruin!

He returned to the village ſometime after, very much weakened, apparently by a dangerous illneſs, but in fact by ſome briſk cathartics he had taken to give him a temporary indiſpoſition. He took lodgings at the inn, under a pretext of being peculiarly delighted with the beauties of the country; alledging alſo that his phyſicians had recommended rural exerciſe in order to complete his recovery. He ſoon found means, by the mediation of his hoſt, to become acquainted with this benevolent family; who, commiſerating his indiſpoſition and ſolitary ſtate, gave him a free invitation to their houſe. He gained their confidence by great prudence and circumſpection, and confirmed it by inſinuating that a diſappointment in love had been the real cauſe of his illneſs. Poor *Nancy* pitied him from her ſoul; and ſhe attempted, by a thouſand friendly offices, to diſſipate the counterfeited gloom that hung upon his brow.

brow. He gradually became more chearful and entertaining. — At length he affected to have conquered his former paſſion, and to have reſolved ever to baniſh from his breaſt the cruel and ungenerous creature who had occaſioned his miſery. He made to *Nancy* a tender of his heart; declaring, that the compaſſion ſhe had diſcovered, and her lively and amuſing company, had greatly contributed towards his cure, and won upon his affections. The artleſs girl could not poſſibly ſuſpect his baſeneſs, and her pity had already prepared her for the kindred impreſſion of love. Having thus gained her affections, the next ſtep was to corrupt her principles. This he attempted by affecting a refinement of ſentiment; by extolling mutual affection and ſympathy of ſoul, as the marriage of nature; by ridiculing the ceremony as a matter of meer form, which was perfectly indifferent in itſelf; and by repreſenting boundleſs confidence as the only genuine teſt of love.

He

He promiſed her marriage indeed, but raiſed many objections to its being immediate; by which however the ardor of his paſſion could by no means be reſtrained. He raiſed in her a curioſity to ſee and partake of the diverſions of the town.—He ſilenced every ſcruple relative to her parents, by perſuading her that their anxiety would ſoon be abundantly recompenced, by the tiding of their daughter's happy and advantageous marriage. In a word, the villain plied every art of ſeduction, and in a dreadful hour he ſucceeded! She paid for her credulity!—She was loſt by her humanity!

Soon after Nancy had eloped with her gallant to town, I happened to call upon the family, with whom I was upon a very familiar footing; totally ignorant of the event. The ſervant informed me that her miſtreſs was in her chamber very much indiſpoſed. Without enquiring into particulars, I ran up ſtairs with my uſual freedom.

—The

—The darkened room and deep ſilence of the attendants, checked my haſty ſteps.—I enquired after her health. The huſband ſate by the ſide of her bed, in too deep a reverie to notice my entrance.—I drew aſide the curtain, and repeating my queſtion, received a languid look of recognizance as the only anſwer.—I inadvertently enquired for her daughter, and expreſſed my wonder, that the dutiful *Nancy* was not by, to tender her cares.——The name rouſed this wretched parent from her ſtupor. "Oh my child, my child, ſays ſhe, with wildneſs in her eyes, my child is *loſt for ever!* Imagining that the cold hand of death had prematurely cropt this lovely flower; I attempted to adminiſter conſolation, and began to expatiate upon the evils ſhe had eſcaped, and the happy change ſhe had made, in being removed from this dangerous and tempeſtuous world. The mother ſhrieked and fainted; and her huſband, who had hitherto been rapt in penſive ſilence, wrung his hands

hands, and heaved a groan that pierced me to the ſoul! I found that ſomehow or other, I had driven a thorn where I intended to pour in the balm! By proper aſſiſtance the diſconſolate mother recovered from her fit; and looking at me with a countenance inexpreſſibly eager, "Oh, Sir, would to God, I had followed her to the grave; *ſhe would have left us with innocence and honor, and her ſoul would have been happy*"!—Again ſhe fainted.—Theſe intimations left me ſpeechleſs. I was unwilling to believe the fact they hinted; and yet I dared not enquire for an explanation.—Comfort her I could not; the caſe did not admit of it. I ſate by the bed, petrified as it were by the general diſtreſs, and became an additional figure in this mournful group!'

'OH, thou lovely creature! ſubjoined our benevolent hoſt, a tear of compaſſion moiſtening his eye, was it to ſatiate the luſt of a *ſeducer*, that thy mother watched over thy

thy growing charms with ſuch anxious care! Was it for *this* that thy kind parents beſtowed every accompliſhment a ruſtic education could afford! Fatal charms! beauty accurſed! How did they gaze upon them with raptures, and fondly think the lovelieſt ſwain unworthy to poſſeſs thee! Was it that thou mighteſt fall a ſacrifice to *diſhonour*, that thy mother wearied heaven with her prayers for thy recovery from a dangerous diſeaſe! Happy! inexpreſſibly happy, if Heaven had given her ſupplications to the wind, and taken thee *unſullied* into the realms of innocence and bliſs!'

THE whole company were greatly affected by this intereſting narrative. Our imagination ran over theſe ſcenes of diſtreſs; and for ſome time we continued ſilent. At length compaſſion prompted us to make enquiries after the injured family.

"ALAS,

'ALAS, Sirs, anſwered our friend, ſuch a ſtroke is irreparable! This was an anguiſh which time itſelf, that ſovereign antidote to moſt calamities, could never have aſſwaged. The diſconſolate mother died the ſame evening. She is gone to thoſe regions, *where the wicked ceaſe from troubling!* A deep and irrecoverable melancholy ſeized the father; who ſurvived his wife about a twelvemonth. And as to the unfortunate girl, ſhe was ſoon abandoned by her lover, and left to ſupport a miſerable exiſtance by vice and ignominy!

Adieu.

J. B.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

THE COTTAGERS.

——————— Even ſo a gentle pair
By fortune ſunk, but formed of generous mould,
And charm'd with cares beyond the vulgar breaſt,
In ſome lone cot, amid the diſtant woods,
Suſtain'd alone by providential HEAVEN,
Oft as they weeping eye their infant train, &c.

THOMSON.

LETTER XIII.

Stow Gardens, July, 1769.

THERE is ſcarcely a more painful ſenſation, Maria, than that of parting ing with the perſons we eſteem and love, and from whoſe converſation we have enjoyed ſincere pleaſure, without having any rational foundation to hope that ſuch pleaſurable interviews will ever be repeated!— The mind is obliged, upon theſe occaſions, to make uſe of a little artifice in order to reconcile itſelf to its loſs. We immediately form ſome viſionary ſcheme to lull the pain of an eternal adieu! We determine to call upon the party ſometime or other, as we paſs near the place of their abode; nay we will go out of our way; nay we reſolve to take a journey on purpoſe;

poſe: forgetting that the tranſcient viſit of a moment, or of a few hours, were we able to effectuate it, would be but a ſorry recompence for the uninterrupted pleaſures of days; and that, in theſe haſty viſits, we have no leiſure to unbend ourſelves to the freedom and intimacy of old companions! Such reſolutions, however, whether they prove practicable or not, ſoften the ſeverity of ſeparation, until time and the intervention of other objects, in ſome meaſure complete the cure.

THE reluctance with which we parted from Mr. *Wilſon* and his fellow-collegiates, naturally ſuggeſted theſe thoughts. They took their leave in the afternoon, and returned from *Buckingham* to *Oxford*. My companion *Charles* and myſelf accompanied them part of the way, leaving our ladies to the protection of Mr. B**, with whom they have agreed to ſpend a few days. We thus deferred for an hour or

two

two pronouncing the *melancholy adieu*; for ſo I aſſure you it was to us all. Seldom have I paſſed three days in a more eligible, unreſerved, and delightful manner! Never did accidental company ſo ſteal upon any heart!

As we were upon our return to this place, we were moſt agreeably entertained, by contemplating the ſcenes of nature around us. The country is peculiarly engaging at this ſeaſon of the year. The fields are peopled with countrymen, who chearfully reap the fruits of their winter's toil. Every countenance indicates that every heart feels gladneſs.

We were delighted to behold the mirth, jocularity, and happineſs, which ſeemed to be univerſally diffuſed amongſt theſe ſons and daughters of induſtry. It was natural to remark how differently the ideas of labor affect the mind, according to the adventi-

ventitious circumſtances which accompany it. The labors of the huſbandman ought certainly to be placed amongſt the moſt fatiguing. To ſtand, and to ſtoop, for ſo many hours together, in the raging heat of the ſun, ſeems as toilſome as any employment that can be named. Yet it is an employment with which all are pleaſed. The reaſon is obvious. This buſineſs is attended with every circumſtance that has a tendency to exhilerate the ſpirits: working in the open air, in company, in a delightful ſeaſon, nature clothed in her beſt array, the cuſtomary indulgencies allowed by maſters, who, ſhould their general characters be ſordid, feel an impulſe of generoſity at this time from the example of bounteous nature, the proſpects of a harveſt feaſt, as a termination of their labor, theſe all unite to render them happy in the inſtant of toil!

As we were making theſe obſervations, Charles complained of being thirſty; and we had ſcarcely finiſhed them, before we obſerved a ſmall cottage, placed in the upper part of a yard, under a woody hill, by the ſide of the road. The gable-end formed the front. It was built of timber, ranged in the ſhape of a lattice, the interſtices of which were filled up with laths and plaiſter. The wood work was painted yellow, and the plaiſter appeared newly white waſhed. Jeſſamines and woodbines ran up between the windows. A range of martin's neſts hung unmoleſted under the thatch.

My companion propoſed aſking for a glaſs of ſmall beer, or of ſpring water, from theſe cottagers. We accordingly rode up the yard, diſmounted, and knocked at the door. But receiving no anſwer, we lifted up the latch, and entered. The inſide of this little tenement correſponded with its outward appearance. There was

an order and neatneſs in it, which demonſtrated the cleanlineſs and good œconomy of its inhabitants. The floor was of brick, and ſeemed to have been lately waſhed: the deal table between the windows, and the chairs, were perfectly neat and clean; the braſs candleſticks and mortar reflected a luſtre from the chimney-piece; and the poliſhed grate was ornamented with an oaken bow, interſperſed with lelac and thrift. The ſpot was really enviable, and at that inſtant at leaſt, we thought that every moderate deſire might have reſted in it.

BUT, alas! happineſs can be inſured no where. A young woman, of decent appearance, carrying an infant in her arms, and leading a fine boy by the hand, came down ſtairs. There was a ſettled melancholy in her countenance, which ſeemed to indicate, that it was not a momentary ill ſhe ſuffered, but that ſhe was the daughter of affliction.

SHE enquired, with a courteous but plaintive tone of voice, what was our pleaſure?

CHARLES had forgotten his wants the moment he ſaw her; and taking hold of her arm, enquires, tell me, good woman, what is the matter?

THOUGH a ſtranger, he aſked the queſtion with ſuch a frank concern, as pleaded his right to as free an anſwer.

'ALAS! matter enough, Sir, ſhe replied, ſighing: my poor huſband is confined to his bed, and four ſmall children depend on his labor!'

BUT we will hope this is a paſſing evil, and that a few days will reſtore him?

'HE has cut his leg, Sir, with a ſcithe, and the ſurgeon ſays, it cannot be healed

these two months. Thus are all our hopes from this bleſſed harveſt deſtroyed!'

LET us ſee him.

SHE immediately conducted us into his room; and we placed ourſelves the one upon the bed, and the other upon a chair by the ſide of it. A little lovely girl brought her doll to me to admire, and a cat purred upon Charles's knee. We were at once of the family.

THE unaffected concern we expreſſed for this afflicted couple, very ſoon removed their reſtraint, and made them communicative. We learned that the ſting of their diſtreſs lay, in their not being able to make good ſome arrears, due to their landlord, in which, the expences lately incurred by a lying-in, and the illneſs of two children, who were juſt recovered from the ſmall-pox, had neceſſarily involved them; and

that

that all their hopes of extricating themſelves had depended upon the profits of the enſuing harveſt; which were now cut off!

BUT will not your landlord have patience till better days?

'No, Sir, he will not, he has threatened to ſeize, if we do not pay him within a fortnight.'

BUT tell us who and what is your landlord? Is he rich? Is he a ſevere and rigorous man? Where does he live? Can we go to him?

HE lives ſeveral miles from hence. He is ſaid to be worth near four hundred pounds a year. I do not know what his temper is, ſaid the poor woman, for we have not had occaſion to try it before; but this I know, he often finds it difficult to

get his money from ſome of his tenants, who are *able* to pay him; and this I ſuppoſe makes him ſeverer upon thoſe who *are not.*

To be indiſcriminate is to be unjuſt, ſays Charles. But what do you owe him?

'FIFTEEN ſhillings for the laſt quarterage; and God knows, the houſe is all the money the better: for my huſband has painted it himſelf, juſt before his accident, to make it a little decent and comfortable: and now we muſt leave it for ſomebody elſe, and be turned a drift the Lord knows where!'

HERE ſhe burſt into tears.

DON'T cry, *Bet*, ſays the man, his utterance half choaked with grief; God will provide, ſomehow, or ſome how; never fear.

THAT

THAT he will, ſays Charles, I'll anſwer for it; blowing his noſe, and furtively drawing his handkerchief over his eyes and cheeks.

WERE you ever in arrears before?

'NEVER, Sir. We have rented this houſe ſix years and a half, and have always paid every quarter day.'

WHAT do you owe more?

'ONLY two ſhillings, for a buſhel of barley.'

PRAY, how much do you gain a week?

'SOMETIMES, anſwered the huſband, eighteen pence a day, ſometimes eighteen pence and my victuals. In harveſt-time I have a good half crown, or three ſhillings'.

A STIFLED ſigh followed this laſt declaration.—

AND can you maintain your family upon theſe wages?

'ALACK, Sir! ſays the woman, we live like kings and queens, when my man is well. Thank God, he is honeſt and ſober, and minds the main chance. Beſides, we have a Cow that goes to common, and ſhe gives us as much milk as we want: We kill a hog too, every Chriſtmas, of our own rearing; and this, with a few hens and chickens, and a little garden behind the houſe, half maintains us.'—

YE great ones of the earth, hear this, and bluſh at the wants you have heaped upon yourſelves! Bluſh yet more at your having ſacrificed ſo many retreats of true happineſs and contentment, to your inſipid and joyleſs extravagance!—

MY benevolent friend beckoned me to the window; and after a few moments conſultation, we agreed to preſent this unfortunate couple with *two guineas*; at once to extricate them from their preſent difficulties, and place them ſomewhat in advance.

THE poor man attempted to ſpeak, but joy and gratitude overwhelmed him. The wife attended us to our horſes, loading us with bleſſings till they became a burden; and we obſerved her following us with her eyes, and making the laſt acknowledgments by ſigns, as we were diſappearing.

WE were ſcarcely out of ſight, before Charles recollected that there was a ſurgeon's bill to be paid; and whilſt we were ruminating upon the ſubject, we ſaw a decently dreſſed man, with a buſhy wig and ruffles, riding towards us. Here's the *Doc-*

tor, ſays Charles, I'll ſpeak to him. He proved the ſame. He was going to viſit his patient. He confirmed the account they had given of their circumſtances, and alſo gave them an excellent character for diligence and ſobriety.

WELL then, you will make your bill as ſmall as poſſible, ſays Charles?

IT ſhall not coſt them a ſingle farthing, anſwered the ſurgeon; and if the pariſh refuſe to pay me, I will give my attendance *gratis*.

GOD bleſs you! Heaven reward you, quoth Charles, with a glow of gratitude in his cheeks, as if he himſelf were to receive the benefit.

AND now, *who* will have laid out his money to the beſt advantage, exclaims my friend, as we continued our ride, this rigorous

gorous landlord or ourſelves? He will perhaps purchaſe a powder-poutch, frame a picture for his dining-room, treat his dog with a handſome collar, or himſelf with a new whip, with theſe fifteen ſhillings; and We have redeemed a worthy family from deſtruction with that ſum! Nay, the peace and contentment which they may enjoy for years, is the purchaſe of *two guineas!* Gracious Heaven! did your Rich Men but know the *pleaſure* of DOING GOOD, how *luxuriouſly* they might live!

Adieu.

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Adieu.

LETTER XIV.

NATIONAL VIRTUES.

Corruptio Optimi eſt Peſſima.

Juv.

LETTER XIV.

July, 1769.

To Maria.

I Was agreeably ſurprized laſt night upon my return from Buckingham, where I had ſpent the day, with the ſight of your moſt acceptable letter. Happy am I to learn that you are ſo well entertained by your worthy hoſt and his family. The manner in which you paſs your time is rational and pleaſing; nor am I ſorry to ſee that *amuſements* are made a conſiderable part of your plan. To devote ſome portion of our time to innocent pleaſures is, in my opinion, a duty we owe to ourſelves, our health, and ſpirits. Indeed I have often remarked, that perſons of the beſt

ſenſe,

ſenſe, and of the beſt diſpoſitions are unhappy, if they have not a taſte for ſome amuſement.

Fling but a *ſtone*, the giant dies,

As Mr. Green wittily expreſſes it in his excellent poem on the ſpleen.

THE paſſions of the mind are diſtinguiſhed by ſome into two oppoſite claſſes; into thoſe which contract, and thoſe which dilate the heart; and whatever has a tendency to place us in a ſtate favourable to either the one or the other of theſe, diſpoſes us to its kindred affections. Thus when our ſpirits flow briſkly and chearfully, which is often occaſioned by trifling amuſements, better than by things of a more intereſting nature, the heart is generally open to the *good-natured* virtues. Whereas a mind all that is even *well-diſpoſed*, when it is under the influence of a *gloomy mood*, muſt, in many of the leſſer articles of ſocial intercourſe,

courſe, make a kind of effort upon itſelf, to do an act of common juſtice to another.

Be merry and happy therefore my Maria, while you can. *Let us enjoy to-day, becauſe to-morrow is uncertain*, is orthodox epicurianiſm. But let us take eſpecial care not to encroach upon the rights of to-morrow. This would be no *æconomy* of happineſs, but the certain road to a ſpeedy bankruptcy, and the moſt effectual way to blaſt that conſiderable portion of enjoyment, which, with a little prudent management, we are capable of poſſeſſing in almoſt every ſtation. *Love and reverence your future ſelves*, is an adage frequent in the mouth of a friend of mine; and though the expreſſion borders upon an abſurdity, for it is not eaſy to love or reverence what is an object of futurity; yet the ideas couched under it are very important. They teach us to bring our future exiſtance under our immediate inſpection, and to contemplate what effects our actions will leave behind.

behind them, or in what ſtate of accounts they will place the mind, reſpecting that moſt valuable of all treaſures, HAPPINESS.

I AM glad to find that my letters dated from Uxbridge came ſafe to hand, and that they have afforded you ſome amuſement. You aſk me for a more ſerious ſolution of the queſtion, *whence ariſes the modern love of* ſentiment? *And whether it does not proceed from, or at leaſt be not intimately connected with, greater perfection in* morals?

I AM at a loſs what anſwer to make you, reſpecting either of theſe queries. Perhaps an attention to the firſt may enable us to gueſs at the ſecond. I cannot think, that every age grows uniformly worſe than the preceding; nor would I on the other hand ſuffer myſelf to be dazzled with a falſe luſtre, or ſeduced by ſpecious appearances. The truth is, Maria, that in every age, and in every nation under heaven, the number of perſons uniformly

formly actuated by the genuine principles of reaſon, has been extremely ſmall. The majority have ever been, and I ſuppoſe ever will be, the ſlaves and the dupes of faſhions, cuſtoms and prejudices. According to the nature of theſe, and in proportion as they have been more or leſs favourable to morals, has the age taken its leading character and complexion. I may farther remark, that, whatever be the reigning virtue or vice, we ſhall always meet with multitudes that will even counterfeit it, and will make themſelves appear either better or worſe than they really are, in order to attain to the faſhionable ſtandard of the times. So that, although there may be a great difference in the character of a nation, and the ſame people may, under oppoſite circumſtances, poſſeſs the moſt oppoſite qualities, yet it would be extremely difficult nicely to aſcertain the quantity of good or bad, in any given period.

THE moſt barbarous ages and nations, who have been accuſtomed to follow their natural impulſe, unreſtrained by faſhion, or unfettered by that multiplicity of laws introduced by civilization; theſe have always had claſſes of virtues and vices peculiar to themſelves. Indeed their peculiarity has chiefly conſiſted in their *extremes!* Do we not, Maria, often read of heroic and generous actions performed by them, far exceeding any that the hiſtory of *poliſhed nations* can afford, blended with treacheries and cruelties, at the thoughts of which every modern tyrant would ſhudder? When we hear of an Indian chief, torturing his captives with wanton cruelty, and exulting in the pangs he excites, we juſtly hold his barbarity in execration; but when we reflect, that this very Indian, ſhould he be rendered captive by the viciſſitudes of war, will bear ſimilar puniſhments, with the greateſt magnanimity; will provoke the enemy to increaſe his tortures; — will ſmile con-

contemptuouſly upon every effort to ſhake his fortitude;--will ſing with apparent compoſure in the midſt of his ſufferings—our indignation changes into aſtoniſhment, and we are tempted to conſider every modern example of paſſive courage, as comparative *puſillanimity*.

THUS in the early periods of the Britiſh hiſtory, are we not continually preſented with the nobleſt inſtances of true greatneſs, intermixed with innumerable acts of cruelty and oppreſſion? If aſſaſſins lurked in the courts and camps of princes, more than in the preſent day, we are alſo told, and that too by creditable hiſtorians, of * loyal ſubjects who voluntarily expoſed their own bodies to the deadly wound, aimed at the perſon of their ſovereign! If we read of baſe attempts made upon the lives of kings, by men even of elevated ſtation, we alſo read of kings generous enough to par-

* Lilla and Hubert de St. Clare.

don

don the offender, and receive him into the arms of friendſhip *. We are told of chiefs juſtly celebrated for their many virtues, who have yet imbrued their hands in murder †;—of females of rank and family, who have not refuſed to take the murderer of their conſorts as partners of their beds ‡; of brethren, exciting horrid civil wars, from a ſpirit of rivalſhip and luſt of power, and yet intermixing the trueſt marks of fraternal attachment, with their fierceſt animoſities ‖.

Nor are theſe the ſingularities of *Britain*, Maria. Similar inſtances are to be found in a greater or leſs degree in the more uncultivated ſtate of all nations. Theſe early periods may be deemed the *paſſionate ages*, in which the human mind, free from every foreign controul, is agitated like a troubled ſea, by the guſts and whirl-

* William the Conqueror. Malcolm, king of Scotland. † Egbert. ‡ Elfrida. ‖ Robert, the ſon of William the Conqueror.

winds

winds of paſſion; and like the waves in a ſtorm alſo, it riſes at one inſtant to the ſummit of greatneſs, ſinking the next down to the depth of turpitude. But we cannot make a juſt and impartial eſtimate of its comparative merits and demerits, unleſs we contemplate it in each of theſe extremes.

Even in thoſe dregs of days, days of barbarity worſe than merely ſavage, when the minds of men were under the tyranny of Romiſh ſuperſtition, when not only equal ignorance prevailed, but ignorance conſecrated by prieſtcraft; yet bright ſparks of excellence, at times, ſhone through the almoſt univerſal gloom: and the force of wild and mad enthuſiaſm excited to actions, to which better principles would have been inadequate. Nor can the ſtricteſt Proteſtant forbear to admire the zeal, activity, ſelf-denial, and perſeverance of which even falſe conceptions of duty, and of the nature

ture of religious obligations, have been productive!

As we find therefore a conſiderable ſhare of virtuous diſpoſition, even at times the moſt unfavourable to it, we might next enquire into the ſtate of National Virtues, under the moſt advantageous circumſtances, when the reformed religion was generally received and firmly eſtabliſhed; when the ferment of religious controverſy had ſubſided, and yet a deep ſenſe of the importance of thoſe tenets, which had been the ſubjects of contention, ſtill remained. We ſhould learn, that at this period, a different claſs of virtues and vices were introduced.—The neceſſity of attending to the duties of public and private worſhip was univerſally acknowledged and enforced:—Every one was aſſiduouſly inſtructed in thoſe articles, which were deemed eſſential to the Chriſtian faith:—A great regard to character and conſiſtency of behaviour, would

would naturally accompany this public profeſſion of religion. As ſuch who were inclined to ſerious piety, were then in no danger of being ridiculed out of their principles, it is to be preſumed, that there was, among individuals, more real piety than at preſent: and we will ſuppoſe that numbers, by repeatedly engaging in religious acts, and enjoying the advantages of a religious education, would follow a courſe of life, totally different from that to be expected of the ignorant and thoughtleſs.—Thus far the *good*.—But, from the general tendency of mankind to pervert, manifold alſo were the *evils* derived from this complexion of the times.—A ſpurious religion was frequently impoſed upon the multitude.—Men were too often taught to place a greater confidence in the *forms*, than in the *power* of godlineſs.—A cenſorious diſpoſition, much ſpiritual pride and bigotry, attended a ſervile attachment to particular creeds and modes of worſhip:—neither did

the *morals* of men bear any adequate proportion to the ſtrictneſs of their *profeſſion*; and the *external ſhow* of religion was too often ſubſtituted for the *reality*. In theſe days it was cuſtomary for every country gentleman, not only to erect a chapel adjacent to his manſion, but punctually to attend divine ſervice there: yet they had generally learned the art of blending their religion, criminal ambition, and ſordid intereſts ſo intimately together, that the former did not appear to have had the leaſt check upon the latter. In ſhort, we may ſafely pronounce, Maria, that the moſt dangerous hypocriſy muſt prevail, where the external profeſſion of religion is in general repute. The difficulty of diſtinguiſhing the *true* man from the *falſe*, gives perpetual opportunities to the deſigning and unprincipled, to practice innumerable acts of fraud, injuſtice and oppreſſion, under the maſk of ſuperior piety.

THESE manifold abuſes, ſo prevalent in the *religious æra*, could not eſcape the attention of men of ſenſe and diſcernment. The philoſopher and the man of wit exerted their talents to correct theſe abuſes; the one by the force of reaſon, the other by that of ridicule. Their attempts might perhaps ſhock ſome of the pious of thoſe times, and they would doubtleſs alarm the hypocrites; but they opened the eyes of many a ſenſible and well diſpoſed mind, and they rejoiced the hearts of thoſe intermediate characters, whom a regard to the general ideas of decency had held under the moſt irkſome reſtraints, and who yet poſſeſſed the principles of honour too ſtrongly to wear the garb, or ſeek the rewards of hypocriſy. Theſe were glad to be reſcued from that yoke of formality which they found ſo heavy to bear. But unfortunately, thro' the unguarded and indiſcriminate manner in which the religious abuſes of the times were attacked, co operating with

that propenſity to pervert, which is ſo prevalent among mankind, the cauſe of true religion was injured, as much as it was benefitted by the antagoniſts of bigotry and fanaticiſm. Chriſtianity itſelf was diſingenuouſly charged with foſtering thoſe very vices it moſt ſeverely condemns; and genuine piety was deeply wounded by the ſhafts that were profeſſedly, but unſkilfully, levelled at falſe religion and hypocriſy. In taking off the *cloak*, *they tore the coat alſo*. They effectually rooted up the *tares*, but then they deſtroyed the *wheat*. And are not the conſequences at this hour too apparent? Is not every ſpecies of *religion* laughed out of countenance? Are we not reſtrained from making the leaſt external ſhew of *piety*, even upon the moſt pertinent occaſions, leſt we ſhould be branded with the names of *enthuſiaſts* or hypocrites? Our churches are deſerted by every man of faſhion, and the chapels of our nobility either ſtand unoccupied, or are degraded into

into offices and ſtables! May I not venture to affirm, Maria, without danger of exaggeration, that multitudes ſeem to be in the ſentiments of the lady I once mentioned to you, who was full of apprehenſions, leſt her ſon ſhould turn methodiſt, becauſe he had a fit of thoughtfulneſs upon the death of his father!

The rational Chriſtian, indeed, attempted to ſtem the double torrent. He vindicated the truths of Chriſtianity, while he endeavoured to reſcue its doctrine, from the corruptions and falſe gloſſes of ignorant and deſigning men. He demonſtrated, that the religion of Jeſus inculcates the pureſt morality. He enlarged upon and explained, from the pulpit or the preſs, thoſe duties which polemical divines ſeemed to have utterly forgotten, in the heat of their contention for particular tenets. But his zeal to oppoſe that kind of religion, which had in a great

meaſure excluded morality, rendered his diſcourſes little more than a ſyſtem of *Ethics*; and though they could not fail to convince the judgment, yet they had the leſs effect upon the heart, by being too much ſeparated from that ſtrain of piety and devotion, which alone can give ſpirit, uniformity, and ſtability to virtuous conduct.—Writers of the *ſentimental* claſs alſo lent their aid, to reſcue morality from the hands of thoſe who had attempted to ſubſtitute a falſe religion in its ſtead. They proved, that the love of virtue was perfectly conſonant to the nature and frame of man. They endeavoured to allure to the practice of it, by diſplaying its excellence, beauty, and ſublimity. They laudably attempted to ſoften the human heart, and prepare it for the reception of every amiable and godlike impreſſion.—It is obſervable, farther, that thoſe who were the moſt inimical to the cauſe of religion, ſtill profeſſed the higheſt veneration for all the obligations

ſigations of morality.—Thus it happened, that perſons, whoſe ſentiments were in other reſpects adverſe, and who were actuated by the moſt oppoſite motives, ſtill united in enforcing all the ſocial and relative duties. By the union of theſe different parties the general tone was now changed. LOVE TO MAN was extolled as the ſum of our duty. The excellence of virtue, and its ſufficiency to promote the general happineſs, became the conſtant topicks. This change, as long as it had the recommendation of novelty, not only gained attention, but promiſed to effectuate a total reformation of manners. The mind ſeemed to be emerging from bigotry and ſuperſtition: many pernicious vices were corrected, which thoſe had propagated and nouriſhed; and moral writers began to triumph in their victory over the deſtructive and unſocial principles of mankind, that were rather cheriſhed than ſubdued by a

falſe and corrupted religion. This promiſed to be the *moral age*.

But, my good friend, to return once more to my axiom, *the generality of mankind will pervert*. It were the greateſt folly to expect that rigid virtue, which runs counter to the extravagant deſires and ambitious purſuits of man, ſhould be univerſally and uniformly practiſed. And yet what is to be done? The principle within us which approves of excellence, that moral appetite implanted in our Nature's craving after worth, will not ſuffer the human mind to reſt totally vacant! It muſt catch at ſomething, either to be in humour with itſelf, or to make ſome little proviſion for the poſſibility of an hereafter. It formerly had recourſe to ſuperſtitious rights and ceremonies, to modes of faith, or zeal for particular tenets, but the progreſs of common ſenſe has deprived it of theſe. Its only reſource then is to eſtabliſh a kind of

ſen-

ſentimental ſyſtem of its own; to make a judicious ſelection of ſuch principles as are the moſt flattering to our pride; and to practiſe thoſe virtues which are performed with greater pleaſure, or are attended with ſuperior applauſe. And this, in my opinion, has introduced the *ſentimental æra* in which we live. By this ſyſtem of things it is that ſtrict juſtice is made to give way to tranſcient fits of generoſity; and a *benevolent* turn of mind ſupplants rigid integrity. The ſympathetic heart, not being able to behold miſery without a ſtarting tear of compaſſion, is allowed, by the general ſuffrage, to atone for a thouſand careleſs actions, which infallibly bring miſery with them. In *commercial* life, the Rich oppreſs the poor, and contribute to hoſpitals; a monopolizer renders thouſands and tens of thouſands deſtitute in the courſe of traffic; but chearfully ſollicits or encourages ſubſcriptions to alleviate their diſtreſs. In *civil life* we no longer harbour malice, in-

deed, nor ſeek clandeſtine methods of revenge; but a man of *ſenſibility*, (and this is a character we all affect,) muſt neceſſarily have the moſt delicate ſenſe of honour, and be quick in his reſentments. He turns judge, jury, and executioner, in an inſtant after an imaginary offence has been committed: but it depends upon the caſual direction of a ſword's point, or the flaſh of a piſtol, whether he ſhall murder his evocation for a trifle, or generouſly forget the injury, and embrace the offender with all the cordiality of friendſhip! Nay, the very *highwayman*, though in the way of his 'vocation', he endangers your life, and plunders you of your property, yet, the transfer being once made, he will nobly reſtore a favourite watch or ring, or generouſly return a part of his ſpoil, to enable you to defray the expences of your journey! And this partial act of liberality in a great degree effaces from our minds the impreſſion of his guilt!

THIS ſingular æra has been greatly forwarded, and is ripened into its preſent ſtate of perfection, by that numerous claſs of authors which are termed *ſentimental*.—It is obſervable, that writers and readers have a reciprocal influence upon each other. Men of diſtinguiſhed genius often poſſeſs the power of leading the taſte of an age, which, once introduced, will always direct the pens of inferior and ſubſequent writers; theſe again increaſe and diffuſe yet more the taſte which gave them origin; and the more it is diffuſed, the greater will be the demand for that particular ſpecies of writing.—But publications in the ſentimental ſtile happen to be peculiarly acceptable, as they neither require deep attention to inveſtigate them, nor recollection to fix them in the mind. It is their proper office to addreſs the fancy and play about the heart; ſo that, while we value ourſelves for the ſuperiority of our taſte, and applaud our reliſh for what is deemed the

ſublimeſt ſpecies of compoſition, we are happily exempt from the toil of ſtudy.—

THESE various cauſes united, Maria, have abſolutely raiſed a kind of ſentimental ferment in the nation. Hence it is that all our modern productions, whether ſermons, eſſays, novels, romances, or comedies, are become ſo wonderfully ſentimental! Nay, our very news-papers, and the advertiſements in them, abound with refined ideas, and affect to breathe a delicate ſenſibility.

BUT it is neceſſary further to remark, that, although our preſent ſyſtem of virtue is ſo very imperfect, yet *it* alſo has its *nominal profeſſors* and *arrant hypocrites*. The fact is, that our moſt common language is influenced by this prevailing turn. Thoſe expreſſions, which were at firſt dictated by a feeling heart and refinement of thought, are now thrown away upon the moſt trivial occaſion, or ſubſtituted in the place

place of genuine ſentiment and real feeling. As particular *phraſes* were formerly miſtaken for the language of Sion, and he that adopted them thought himſelf entitled to the character and privileges of a citizen of the place, thus do many perſuade themſelves, that they have much compaſſion and benevolence in their diſpoſitions, becauſe they expreſs themſelves in the *language* of benevolence. And I greatly ſuſpect, that numbers who would be the freeſt to laugh at the *religious hypocrite*, are equally deſerving of ridicule for their *affectation* of ſentiment.

If the above ſketch, imperfect as it is, be in any reſpect juſt, it will enable you, Maria, to ſolve your own queſtion.—Indeed the obvious diſpoſition of the times betrays us into a ſingular inconſiſtency of character and conduct. It makes us compaſſionate and yet cruel, thoughtleſs, and yet deſigning! We pretend not to have

the

the leaſt power over temptations, nay, we profeſſedly give the reigns to the moſt illicit pleaſures, or purſuits of intereſts, by which we inevitably ſpread infamy and diſtreſs: but when we behold the objects of wretchedneſs, we are quick to relieve them! We laugh at the man who is very ſcrupulous about the ways and means of advancing his fortune, upon a *large ſcale*, and yet we deteſt *little* meanneſſes and ungenerous actions! We would ſell our country to the beſt bidder in the courſe of trade; and yet we want neither ſpirit nor courage to defend her rights, when we think them invaded! We are much more diſpoſed to act nobly and ſuccour diſtreſs, as it ariſes, rather than think prudently of the methods to prevent it! Our public acts of generoſity are the boaſt of this nation, and the aſtoniſhment of others; and yet inſtead of annihilating miſery, they become, perhaps, the grand ſources of indolence, extravagance and debauchery, among the claſs of people

people they are intended to aid and befriend! The tenderneſs and commiſeration we exerciſe towards the guilty, occaſion rapines and murders, that are an utter diſgrace to a community which profeſſes to have either police or civilization!—In a word, we are totally defective in that uniformity and conſiſtency of character, which is the true glory, and will alone conſtitute the permanent happineſs of a people! Our morals perfectly reſemble the female dreſs and faſhions of the times, where external ſhow takes place of intrinſic value; and the *gayneſs* of apparel is often made to atone for its poverty. Inſtead of being built upon a rock, I fear our virtues are too much like the elegant decorations of an edifice devoted to pleaſures, that can hardly reſiſt a ſhower of rain, and would tremble at the diſtant report of a thunder ſtorm!

To conclude this long ſermon with a ſuitable application; Let us, Maria, venerate that genuine ſentiment which is the *perfection*

tom of human nature, the *finiſhing* of a virtuous character; which may be called the logic of a heart, highly cultivated, *diſcerning* and *feeling* beauties in conduct or opinions, before rational deduction is able to develope their truth and propriety:—let us bewail the imperfections of human nature, which continually impel us to ſome pernicious extreme:—and let us deteſt the counterfeit of ſenſibility, the *affectation* of ſentiment in thoſe who have no feeling at all!

Adieu,

J. B.

LET-

LETTER XV.

AFFECTATION, &c.

Tout ce qui eſt réel n'a pas beſoin de l'affectation ; & tout ce qui eſt affecté n'eſt pas réel.

OXONS.

LETTER XV.

Stow Gardens, July, 1769.

To Maria.

I Shall not take up *your* time, Maria, in giving a minute deſcription how I have been employing *mine*, ſince the departure of the ladies for Buckingham. The number of my letters will beſt explain this, and vouch for me, that I have not been idle. My relaxations conſiſt either in riding on horſeback, fiſhing, rambling about the gardens, or taking a dinner with Mr. B***. My friend Charles is always with me in the evenings, tho' his days are moſtly employed in gallanting the ladies. Where the treaſure is, the heart will be alſo, and where the heart, the perſon, if poſſible.

poſſible. This my ſolitary ſtate is now and then relieved by the accidental companies that viſit the gardens, to which I ſometimes condeſcend to officiate as guide. I need not inform you, Maria, that in general accidental companies are very inſipid. Their vague ill directed applauſe, their extaſy at trifles, and their inſenſibility to real beauties, but badly requite the pains which are taken to inform them. However, I ſometimes meet with a *caricatura*, that enlivens the ſcene, and makes *folly itſelf* of ſome value.

But to proceed methodically, I will now give you, in due order, a faithful hiſtory of the moſt intereſting incidents of the laſt eight and forty hours.

To begin with a ſpecimen of

AFFECTATION.

As my friend Charles and myſelf were adjuſting the particulars of our breakfaſt with

with the landlady, the other morning, and ſettling the points between tea and coffee, toaſt and bread and butter, our attention was excited by the arrival of a poſt-coach at the door. The noiſe of this vehicle was a ſufficient ſummons to miſtreſs, maid, hoſtler, &c. nor could we incuriouſly maintain our ſeats, amidſt the general commotion.

A COACHMAN, and two poſtilions, had the direction of four raw-boned *Roſonanties*. So ſober were theſe animals, and ſo well diſpoſed, that I am perſuaded they would never have deviated from the right line of duty, excepting by an unlucky ſtumble or a fall; and in this caſe their penurious keepers would have been more reſponſible than themſelves: nor would they have been either quarrelſome or friſky with each other, unawed by ſpur or laſh.

THE liveries of theſe three knights were of a faded yellow, faced with faded dirty red.

red. Time had long ſince eaten off all the nap, and was now beginning to pick holes in the ſtuff itſelf. Their legs were fenced againſt accidents, by jack-boots, large and ſtiff as thoſe of *La Fleur*. It was eaſy to perceive, that their clothes were no more made for them, than they were for their cloaths; but that they came together, like many a couple in life, by meer chance.

THE coach, both from its antique figure and manifold infirmities, ſeemed of the race of thoſe that were going out of faſhion in the laſt century. Tho'-it had obviouſly been new vamped for the journey, neither puttey nor paint could entirely hide the meandring cracks and branching crevices; nor could bands of iron, applied to different parts of the wheels, give youthful firmneſs to the decrepitudes of age.—A ſplendid court of arms, with a coronet for the creſt, atoned for all theſe defects.

PER-

PERCEIVING that *Ladies* were in this curious carriage, I ran like a gallant 'ſquire and offered them my hand. The firſt that preſented herſelf to the door of the coach was ſomewhat advanced in life, but ſtill in tolerable *bonpoint*; and ſeemed in complexion, as well as circumference, to have held out nobly againſt the attacks of age. The ſecond was her counterpart;—of Pharoah's lean kind, over whom age ſeemed to have gained a complete victory. Her countenance was ſallow and emaciated; her ſharp aquiline noſe had received a deeper tinge from a profuſion of Spaniſh ſnuff, which had alſo richly embroidered her handkerchief, *en paſſant*. She gave me her withered hand, and tottered as ſhe ſtept. Yet even this comely damſel could not ſubmit to that tyrant, Time, without capitulating with him for a youthful dreſs. She had, doubtleſs, deſigned to conceal his victory by this artifice; but the old ſophiſt well

well knew the contraſt would render his triumph more diſtinguiſhed and complete.

THE fair ones immediately enquired for the beſt room, and ſeemed highly to reſent its being occupied by other company.—They lamented the inconveniences to which perſons of diſtinction were expoſed, on public roads, and at filthy inns:—They aſked a thouſand queſtions concerning the party that had ſupplanted them; whence they came, where they were going, and whether or not they were people of *quality*. To which no very ſatisfactory anſwers could be given. During our breakfaſt we were highly entertained with the inceſſant ringing of the bell, and perpetual meſſages.—The tea equipage was too *paltry*—The tea was not good—the water did not boil—the cream appeared curdled—orders were given about their own ſervants, who were already eagerly employed round a briſket of beef—the girl of the inn was queſtioned

oned about milliners and ribbons; and ſcolded, becauſe the neareſt ſhop was almoſt four miles diſtant. —The errant boy was ſent twice for a pennyworth of ſnuff. becauſe the ſilly booby could not diſtinguiſh between *Rappeé* and *Havannah*;—and the Miſtreſs of the houſe was continually called to the bar to anſwer interrogatives.

After they had breakfaſted, and, as we thought, taken a final leave of theſe quarters, our Hoſteſs enjoyed all the ſweets of revenge, by giving us the hiſtory of her reſpectable gueſts.

'They are maiden ſiſters, ſays ſhe, poſſeſſed of a conſiderable eſtate in *Yorkſhire*; to which they pay a viſit every year, when all the *Gentry* quotha are out of town;—tho' they have no more to do with the gentry than I have, nor ſo much neither. Their money was left them by a rich uncle, who went up to London a poor ſhop boy; but

they ſay he got upwards of *thirty thouſand pounds*, by keeping what they call a *ſlop-ſhop*, and buying ſailors tickets the laſt war. I don't rightly underſtand what that means, gentlemen, but I've heard it is not the moſt honourable buſineſs in the world. No matter for that; money makes the mare to go, as the ſaying is. Tho' in my mind they would do a right thing to give their father ſome of it; for he is nothing but a country farmer to this day; and as poor as a church mouſe: and they take no more notice of him than if he was a dog! And yet theſe fine Ladies, as *Betty* their chamber-maid tells us, have refuſed a great many good offers, becauſe the gentlemen's *blood* was not good enough. Egad they are in the right of it, for I believe their blood wants mending! Did you ſee what yellow crow-flowered complexions they had?"

BUT ſaid I, the coronet upon the coach!

L—d

'L—d Sir, you know well enough, that all is not *gold that glitters*. It is nothing in the world but a *job-coach*. They take care to hire the ſame every year, that it may paſs for *their own*; and they think becauſe it is ſuch an old crazy thing, that it looks like an ancient family coach, which they are loath to break up, out of liking to the antiquity of it. Such a Couple for pride and covetuouſneſs you never ſaw in your life! Why they dined here once as they were going to town, upon two mutton chops, and half a pint of ale! And all the three men waited at table, to make the feaſt the fuller, as the ſaying is.'

But how does this *Retinue* agree with ſuch œconomy?

'Mighty well, when you are let into the ſecret of it. The tall fellow of a coachman is the only ſervant they have; and you may plainly ſee by his looks that he is half-

ſtarved. Poor devil, they ought to feed him better, for his work is hard enough, I'm ſure. He ſtands for coachman, footman, gardener, and labourer too, when at home. And as to the other fellows, they are north countrymen, to whom they give a lift down to their native place, upon the condition that they will put on that ſhabby livery.—It is no wonder their cloaths fit them ſo well!—It is not our buſineſs, continues our landlady, to turn any body away; but we hate to ſee them! They want more waiting upon than the beſt nobleman in the land! My lord Hallifax, or Spencer, or lord Northampton, who now and then comes this way, are not half the plague to us, God bleſs them, though they ſpend ten times the money. My ladies have all *their eye teeth about them*, as the ſaying is. Do you know they had no change either for *Molly* or the *Hoſtler*, *this* year; no more had they the *laſt*; nor will they the *next*; I'll anſwer for that!'

I Told

I Told you Maria, we thought that they had taken their leave of theſe premiſes, but we were in part miſtaken, for they were gone to viſit the gardens which lay in their road to *Towceſter*. Charles propoſing a walk, we took in our hand a little Niece of our hoſteſs, who had lately come from London to pay her aunt a viſit; and wandering towards the garden gate we ſaw the ſplendid equipage above deſcribed, ſtanding before it. Whether we were prompted by love or curioſity, I ſhall not determine, but we immediately directed our courſe that way.

As we entered the garden gate, we ſaw the elder of the ſiſters, leaning, by reaſon of her lameneſs, upon the ſhoulder of one of her temporary domeſtics; and the younger, by reaſon of her fatneſs, leaning upon the ſhoulder of another. Nor will I here enquire what were our motives, but this I know, that we intentionally kept at a moſt reſpectful diſtance; and took ſuch contrary

courſes, as we dreamed would render a rencontre, impoſſible. After ſome time, however, we unfortunately entered a grove, where we beheld the fatigued damſels, repoſing themſelves upon a ſeat, deſerted by their truſty 'ſquires. We could not with decency retreat, and *la bienſeance* gave us courage to advance. We ſaluted them as we approached; and, contrary to our expectations, they not only returned the ſalute, but began a converſation with our little companion, aſking her her name, her age, whence ſhe came. &c. This introduced a whimſical dialogue, which I will repeat to you, as far as I can recollect it.

AND in what part of London do you live? Enquired the thin Lady.

WHITECHAPEL, anſwered the child.

WHITECHAPEL! exclaimed the Lady; *White Chapel!* —conveying a contraband ſmile to her ſiſter.

WHY

WHY where is White Chapel? Interrogates the other.

AT the very *fag-end* of the city, my dear.—Well for *my* part, continues the elder, I could not exiſt out of the ſound of St *James's bell!*

I THOUGHT, Madam, ſays Charles, with a ſly gravity in his countenance, that St. *Margaret's* bells in *Cornhill*, or St. *Saviour's* in the *Borough*, were deemed the moſt muſical of any?

I MEAN by that, Sir, I ſhould hate to live out of St *James's pariſh.*

WHAT peculiar privileges, continues Charles with the ſame countenance, does this pariſh enjoy? Is it better paved? Are the ſtreets better lighted? Are your taxes lower? Or are you bleſſed with *honeſt* church wardens, madam?

MISTAKING Charles's *affected* ſimplicity for *real*; the ſiſters ſtole a look at each other, which being interpreted, implied, *ſtupid mortal!* Theſe cits want common ſenſe!—At length the elder of them anſwered,

I NEVER trouble my head with ſuch *low* concerns, I aſſure you. What is more to my purpoſe, St. James's pariſh is a place of reſidence for people of the *firſt quality*; and a great many families of *ſuperior* rank and fortune, live in that neighbourhood.

I SUPPOSE then, that you viſit all theſe great people, Madam; and therefore find it convenient to live ſo near them; but yet, as you keep an equipage. —

WE viſit ſeveral families of conſequence, anſwered the jolly Dame, but it is not upon that account ſo much, as for the *reputation* it gives, to dwell in ſo genteel a neighbourhood.

I SHALL

I SHALL be glad to know how far this kind of reputation extends? Becauſe there are ſeveral *porter houſes*, *green grocer's ſhops*, and *coblers ſtalls* in the ſame pariſh. Do they catch any of the honour, Madam? Enquires Charles.

PSHA! Such vermin are neceſſary nuiſances in every part of the town. Beſides, Sir, I muſt tell you, they do not live in any of the principal ſtreets.

So then the honour lies in actually reſiding in the ſame ſtreet? But pray, Madam, continues Charles, does a *family alliance* take place with a great perſonage from the *proximity* of your dwellings? Or, do you acquire a *lineal relationſhip*, by living in the *ſame Row* with a *Nobleman?* I have heard of a man, who, eſcaping from a certain priſon, by means of a rope, boaſted after-

wards that he deſcended *in a right line from king Lud*, but—

BUT you are mighty witty Sir, exclaims the emaciated Fair one; *but* we can expect no other than inſults from low bred cits! This is White Chapel education too, I preſume!

SERIOUSLY, ſays Charles, for he began to be piqued,—and I will ſay that for my friend, he never philoſophiſes ſo well as when he is a little warmed. Seriouſly, Madam, I have too high an opinion of St. *James's pariſh* to ſuſpect that *you* derived *your* education from thence. True dignity and gentility of behaviour are beſt indicated by *waving* your prerogatives, and by attempting to *conceal* that ſuperiority, which might prove a painful reſtraint upon others. And I will alſo add, that true Policy demands this: for Superiors loſe their right to a ſubmiſſive reſpect, the moment they

they haughtily claim it; and Inferiors will grant that by *courteſy*, which can never be *extorted* from them. As ſoon as a contemptuous ſentence drops from your lips we revolt, becauſe we queſtion your *title* to any marks of diſtinction.

Our lady's ſallow hue was reddened up with vexation. But affecting a ſupercilious ſmile, ſhe whiſpered for ſome time in the ear of her younger ſiſter. Charles proceeded in his harangue: Perſons who have any *worthy* diſtinction of character, Madam, may venture to live where they pleaſe; and as to thoſe who have not, it is very *immaterial* where they live. Surely nothing can diſcover a total *want* of conſequence ſo much as to ſeek the ſhadow of it, under the ſkirts of Nobility! Is it not a pitiful, nay a *thieviſh* diſpoſition, to ſet a value upon ourſelves, becauſe we are miſtaken for others? Is it not *childiſh*, to dream that we are perſons of Importance,

becauſe we have artfully perſuaded ſtrangers into that belief? This very affectation of yours demonſtrates, that you are moving out of your proper ſphere: and I will hazard a conjecture, that when your Relatives left the North of England,—for your accent betrays that you were not *born* in St. James's pariſh,—they acquired, under the character of *plodding citizens*, the fortune that has enabled you to aſſociate with your Superiors, and that has inflated you with the ridiculous vanity of *deſpiſing* the claſs of people that has enriched you!

THIS was too much. They were aſtoniſhed at his being able to penetrate ſo deeply into their ſecret hiſtories, and chagrined at the detection. They bruſhed by us full fraught with fury; leaving us the following elegant expreſſions to meditate upon at our leiſure;—'Low-liv'd, ill-bred wretches;—companions for *ſhopkeepers and hoſtlers*.

hoſtlers; who deſerved to be caned for ſuch rude inſults upon ladies of faſhion, &c. &c!

And perhaps, my dear girl, you may be of the ſame opinion. But I muſt confeſs, though in this caſe I was little more than a tacid ſpectator, yet I always conſider affectation as *fair game*, wherever I find it: and I enjoy a peculiar pleaſure—though it is the only pleaſure of the malicious kind I would ever wiſh to enjoy—in ſeeing a *corroſive* applied to this *proud fleſh*. Oh it is a moſt *intolerable* vice!—It not only partakes of deceit and hypocriſy, but of an hypocriſy that *inſults!* It unites the ſins of *omiſſion* and *commiſſion* in the ſame act; for while it implies a *defect*, it makes uſe of a *vile uſurpation* to conceal it!—'Tis a vain ſtruggle for *ſuperiority* and applauſe, in thoſe feeble creatures, who ought to thank their ſtars if they can ſneak through the world *unnoticed!*—In ſhort, Affectation ſwells becauſe it is empty, and then glories in its *bulk!*

I MIGHT

I MIGHT enlarge this ſtring of ſentences, but I dare not proceed farther, leaſt you ſhould ſuppoſe that I *affect* to make fine ſpeeches againſt the folly. I will therefore leave this curious Couple, and introduce you to a groupe of characters that afforded me ſtill higher entertainment.

THE POLITICIANS.

I HAPPENED to ſtep into the kitchen yeſterday in the afternoon; where I ſaw ſeveral Countrymen ſitting round a large oak table, by the window, drinking a ſocial cup of ale, and debating about the affairs of the nation. By the whiteneſs of his hat, and the reſt of his clothes, I perceived the one to be a *Miller*. A ragged blue waiſtcoat, with a little leathern apron tied round it, and a ſaw hanging careleſly over the left arm, indicated the ſecond to be a *Carpenter*.—A ruſty black coat and breeches, enlivened with a red cloth waiſtcoat; a wig

which

which ſeemed to have been the worſt lot of an *Holborn dip*, hanging over one cheek, counterpoiſed by a large quid of tobacco in the other; a head *ſans* hat, ſtockings *ſans* garters, ſhoes *ſans* buckles, and noſtrils high charged with ſnuff, would have ſufficiently marked the third for a *Taylor*, without the aid of a ſkein of blue thread thrown acroſs his neck.—A brown fuſtian ſuit of clothes; a duſky wig well oil'd, but clear of powder; a neat pair of ribbed worſted ſtockings; an old hat cock'd to the beſt advantage; a graduated walking ſtick; and an ink-horn pendent from the button hole of the fourth, told all the world, *this is the Exciſeman.*

THEY were talking, as I entered, about *the national debt.*

THE *Carpenter* thought it was a *mort of money.*

THE

THE *Miller* wiſhed he had half of it in his pocket.

THE *Taylor* giving a ſignificant wink and ſhrug, took a pinch of ſnuff, but ſaid nothing.

THE Exciſeman alledged that it was a mere trifle; boldly affirmed that the increaſe of the national debt, ſo far from being an *evil*, was a general *good*; and in the ardour of his patriotiſm nobly wiſhed it was ten times more. The national debt, ſays he, is like *ballaſt to a ſhip*; it makes the State go the ſteadier.

BUT take care, thought I, you do not kill us with kindneſs, and ſink the Ship by the weight of your preſervation, Mr. Exciſeman. Remember the bark is liable to ſtorms; which I fear ſhe would never weather, without finding ways and means to *lighten her ballaſt!*

WHILE

WHILE I was making this comment upon the Exciſeman's ſimile, within myſelf, I happened accidentally to ſtretch out my arm, and to take down an enormous claſp-knife about three feet long, which lay like a fouling-piece acroſs ſome brackets over the chimney.

A FORFEIT, a *forfeit*, cries the *Cook*.

A FORFEIT, a forfeit, ecchoes the *Scullion*.

EGAD the gemman's nicely catched, quoth the *Miller*.

THE *Taylor* tips him the wink, lifts his right ſhoulder up to his ear, and ſquaring his elbow, rapidly feeds both noſtrils with another pinch of ſnuff, upon this lucky occaſion.

WELL, well, ſays the *Exciſeman*, this is not the firſt, and I hope it will not be the laſt,

laſt, that is taken in ſince I have been ſtationed in this walk.

AT firſt I was a little chagrined, and began to remonſtrate.

THEY ſtrongly pleaded *kitchen* privileges, and cuſtom time immemorial.

I STOUTLY vindicated the rights of mankind; and openly oppoſed cuſtom's being conſtituted a law. A cuſtom, ſaid I, may poſſibly be a *bad* one, and therefore according to this principle, we are obliged to give our ſuffrage to *bad laws*. Beſides, gentlemen, tell me what is it that conſtitutes a cuſtom? It is the frequent repetition of the ſame act. Now if a thing be *wrong* in itſelf, a frequent repetition of it may aggravate the evil, but it cannot bring it *right*. Add *black* to *black* as long as you pleaſe, gentlemen, you can never make *white* of it.

AYE,

AYE, but cuſtom is cuſtom, for all that, cries the *Carpenter*.

THE *Miller* thought the ſame.

THE Exciſeman ſhifted the argument to *privilege*; and the Taylor, by taking another pinch of ſnuff, ſeemed to like the change.

I WAS preparing to defend myſelf upon this ground; and was going to maintain that privileges were either original encroachments of the *Privileged*, or unwary grants of the *Privilegée*, which ought to be reſumed by their wiſer ſucceſſors.—But hang it, thought I, 'tis not reaſonable that their Superiors ſhould engroſs all the *impoſition* to themſelves; let theſe poor fellows come in for a *little* ſhare. So I ſubmitted to the fine which *Jocus*, and *Momus*, and *Bacchus* had conſpired to lay upon the Unwary, and threw down my ſhilling.

THREE

THREE quarts of the beſt ale were immediately ordered by the landlady; and I placed myſelf upon the Bench.

COME Sir, will you drink with a poor man, quoth the *Miller*; handing to me the tankard.

RATHER than with a *rich* man, provided he be *honeſter*.

RIGHT, that's well hit, a-faith, quoth the *Carpenter*; not a little pleaſed with my reply. Come Sir to your health; here's a draught of as good ale as was ever tipt over tongue.

MILLER. Well what do they ſay about Mr. *Wilkes* at London? Will they make him a parliament man at laſt?

TRAVELLER. Nay, that can only be diſcovered by time.

MILLER.

MILLER. *A lud, a lud,* here's ſtrange doings! E'ery thing goes wrong, I think in my heart. Why wheat was raiſed no leſs than two ſhillings a quartern laſt ſaturday at *Buckingham*; and we ſhall ne'er aye it ony cheaper till he's got into the parliament houſe, I know.

EXCISEMAN. *He* in the Parliament houſe! He ought to be in *Newgate*, for writing againſt his *betters*, ſay I.

TRAVELLER. His *Superiors* you mean Sir: as to *betters* 'tis difficult to adjuſt that queſtion.

WELL, our trade is worth nothing, ſays the *Carpenter*, ſince he was turned out.

TRAVELLER. But, Mr. *Carpenter*, how can his election affect *your* buſineſs, one way or the other?

CARPENTER. Alack Sir, I don't know, but they ſay there is a *power* of maſter builders

builders in the jails about London; and that it would never have happened if Mr. Wilkes had not been turned out. Work is grown ſo dead too in our town, we hardly ſtrike a ſtroke once in a week!

WELL, here's to *forty five*, and d——n the man that ſays nay; cries the *Miller*, taking up the tankard, and nodding to me.

AYE, quoth the *Taylor*, that was a glorious year! I ſhould like to ſee them there days over again; confirming his declaration with an emphatical ſhrug.

WHY, what was done in *them there days?* aſked the Exciſeman, with a ſneer.

TAYLOR. Done, why you know as well as I, *Frank*. We fought the French enemies, they *eternal dogs*, and killed the Popiſh pretender, did not we? They were *deviliſhly nonpluſhed*, let me tell you.

BUT

BUT what had *Wilkes* to do with this? Quoth the Exciſeman, laughing.

WHY he was *born* in that year, was not he?

THE Exciſeman triumphed.

Go, you fool, ſays the *Miller*,—finding his toaſt was in danger,—he was no more born in that year than your *Grannum*.

TAYLOR. What then?

MILLER. Why he was *forty five years old*, when Lord *what do ye call him*, put him into priſon there;—and that's it.

THE Exciſeman could no longer contain himſelf; and I was forced to join the laugh againſt my brother patriots; not without being ſomewhat mortified at the reflection, that the ſentiments of the only ſenſible man in the company ſhould be under the bias of *intereſt*.

WERE

WERE I writing to a court politician, he would ſuſpect, by my recital of this curious dialogue, that I meant to inſinuate the doctrine, that as common people are ſo *ignorant*, their wiſer ſuperiors have a right to *lead them by the noſe*. But I do not know, as yet, any ſyſtem of morals that will vindicate my being a *ſcoundrel*, becauſe my neighbour is a *fool!* If *ſtrength* gives me not a legal or honeſt title to oppreſs the *Weak*, much leſs can *knowledge* give me a right to delude the *Ignorant*.

THE CHURCH YARD.

I TOOK a penſive walk yeſterday evening into the *church yard*; which is ſituated within the garden.

LIVELY and volatile as I may ſeem, Maria, I hope that you are ſufficiently acquainted with me, to credit the aſſertion, that

that I enjoy a *ſuperior* pleaſure in thoſe ſcenes which call forth the tendereſt emotions of the ſoul. From this principle it is, that I am induced frequently to viſit the manſions of the dead. This is a ſpot, of all others, the moſt affecting to a ſenſible heart, as well as the moſt pregnant with inſtruction! — This place ſhews to every man the utmoſt extent, the termination of all his earthly proſpects! It points out the iſſue of all his favourite ſchemes and projects;—the winding up of the various ſcenes of life!—Here the *Young* may learn that the moſt diſtant period ſhall arrive!—the *Gay* that a ſhroud muſt be their clothing!—the *Rich*, that their boaſted and envied abundance, was but the tranſient poſſeſſion of an hour!—the *Turbulent* and *Ambitious*, that all is ſilent in the tomb; that the grave knows no prerogative!

And oh, thou blaſter of all the choiceſt fruits of righteouſneſs, *Infidelity!* Is it

to fix us *here* that thou haſt ardently combated the noble truths of revelation?—Is an eternal abode in theſe dreary manſions to be our only recompence, for the joyful hopes of which thou wouldeſt diveſt us?—Do you take ſuch pains to root out our errors and our prejudices, *to leave us mouldring in the duſt?*—Are the narrow confines of the Grave, to a loathſome body, diſcretely hid from human ſight, your only ſubſtitutes for GLORY, HONOUR, IMMORTALITY?

IT hath often been urged, and urged with juſtice, that were the gloomy notions of infidelity true, it is cruel to open the eyes of mankind, merely that they may behold their poverty and diſhonour! Is it not *diabolical* then, to raiſe doubts that may relax the reins of virtue and piety, and deprive thoſe it *affects* to befriend, of their beſt hopes of bleſſings beyond the grave!

UNDER

UNDER the influence of thoughts like theſe, which I am fond of indulging as I walk amidſt the repoſitories of the dead, I cannot help feeling an indignation riſing in my breaſt, whenever I meet with a *quaint* or a *facetious epitaph.* This vicious taſte—vicious in each ſenſe of the word,—altho' it may not be chargeable with the leaſt intentional irreverence, yet it contains ſuch a horrid impropriety, as muſt ſtrike every ſenſible mind. Are thoſe events, my dear friend, which are the moſt important and ſolemn, the proper ſubject for a *jeſt?*—Are the leſſons of admonition, they are deſigned by providence to teach us, to give way to a low *conceit?*—Does Death afford ſuitable materials for a *pun?* Is a *witticiſm* the proper burial ſervice for the *deceaſed?*—Let the *Vices* and *Follies* of mankind be laughed out of countenance and welcome, or let things indifferent be rendered amuſing by ſallies of wit and humour, but

laughter affects not Death, neither is there ought in the priſon of the grave that calls for the pen of jocularity! — The diſſolution of our frames is truly humiliating; the conſequences of this diſſolution momentous; and if we jeſt *here*, *when* or *where* ſhall we be *ſerious!*

LETTER XVI.

THE PROGRESS OF CRITICISM.

Quam ſi legit lœtabor; ſin autem minus,
Habebunt certè quo ſe oblectent Poſteri.

PHÆDRUS.

LETTER XVI.

Stow, July 27, 1769.

To —— FRANKLIN, Senior, Eſq;

"SENTIMENTAL with a witneſs, truly, when we are beſpattered with obſervations and moral reflexions, flying off from the end of the laſh, at every crack of this curious Whip of yours! Let me adviſe you, my good friend, to lay aſide this uncouth whim of turning Conjuror. Believe me, it is a profeſſion for which you were never deſigned by nature; and it has only given an air of *quaintneſs* to remarks, which, altho' they are ſufficiently trite, might yet have paſſed uncenſured, had they been clothed in a leſs fantaſtic garb!"

THIS

THIS, good Sir, or ſome exclamation of a like import, I ſhould doubtleſs expect from the accuracy of your judgment and taſte, were I not perſuaded that the mildneſs of your diſpoſition, and your partiality towards me, would induce you to ſtifle the firſt emotions of ſevere animadverſion.

IF there be any latent ideas of a ſimilar nature, blended with the general compliment you are pleaſed to pay to my letters, I am very willing to prove myſelf to be no *obſtinate* offender. Henceforth ſhall the ſpell be for ever broken: for the future will I flouriſh my whip about, merely as an idle amuſement, without deſignedly touching or offending any ſoul living. I will not ſo much as pretend to *vindicate* the boyiſh gambols which my friſky ſpirits were diſpoſed to play, upon their being eed from the ſmoaky priſon of the town!

Such is the treſpaſs they have committed upon the king's high road,—excluſive of their putting his Majeſty's ſubjects in bodily fear, — that, were he to be tried at the rigid bar of *Criticiſm*, your humble Servant would be condemned to everlaſting ſilence, and his moral ſentiments would be conſigned over to everlaſting oblivion.

AND yet, Sir, if it were not too bold an attempt for me, who, as a ſentimental writer, am ſcarcely *fifteen days old*, to turn Critic and Commentator upon my own epiſtles, and like the Iſraelites who built up the walls of Jeruſalem with the trowel in one hand, and the ſword in the other, to *defend* my reputation even while I am *raiſing* it, I think in my conſcience, ſomething might be alledged in favour of this obnoxious whip, and in exculpation of the unlucky tricks I have been playing with it. I could urge, that in the freedom and jocularity of a private correſpondence, I thought

thought myſelf permitted to throw off thoſe irkſome reſtraints which are requiſite in works deſtined to public inſpection. But I will wave this plea. Nay, I will for an inſtant, conſider myſelf as a candidate for public fame, in the reſpectable character of *Author*; and I will alſo conſider the Gentleman, whom I would beyond every other wiſh to become my Friend, my Patron, my *Mæcenas*, as the Foreman of a jury of critics, determined to purſue me to the utmoſt rigour of their laws.

SUPPOSING myſelf in this predicament, I would firſt, with humble phraſe, plaintive accent, and flattering ſpeeches, endeavour to ſoften the hearts of my obdurate judges.—I would expoſtulate with you concerning the ſeverity of condemning a young *Culprit*, for his *firſt* attempt to impoſe himſelf upon the world, in an aſſumed character.—I would alledge, that I had taken care to guard my conceit with ſo

many pretty circumambient thoughts, which as they were as *light*, I had fondly hoped would have proved as *refreſhing* as air, and thus have been the means of abating the feveriſh heats of criticiſm.—Nay, I would urge, that as it was not my intention to deceive, and as I had given the ſtrongeſt intimations that my whip was materially and truly as very a Horſewhip as was ever bought for ten or a dozen ſhillings, it would be hard, extremely hard, to be ducked and ſouſed over head and ears upon account of it, as if I were actually convicted of being a *Witch* or a *Wizard*.

IF ſuch pleas did not excite your Compaſſion, the next thing ſhould be to ſet you all at defiance — to rail againſt the preſent age, and the general decline of taſte. I would roundly aſſert, that the *genuine ſpirit* of *Criticiſm* had departed this life, and that learned and ingenious authors were haunted and frightened by a *hideous ſpectre*,

tre, like the Defunct in *appearance* indeed, but rendered much more formidable by its very want of SUBSTANTIALITY!—In a word, I would accuſe you all of Ignorance and Partiality, and make my appeal to future ages,

Nor court applauſe in theſe degenerate days.—

THIS ſtep, by the way, would be attended with more inward chagrine and palpitations of heart, than I ſhould chuſe to diſcover. For the misfortune is, there is no poſſible method of arriving to this ſame futurity, without paſſing through you Moderns; and ſhould my Cotempories, either by cold neglect, malice propenſe, or any other wicked motive, ſtifle the poor author's productions in their *infant* age, how, in the name of anxiety, is he to get ſo much beyond them? Beſides, though Ambition might animate me to prefer the approbation of *wiſe* poſterity to the tranſcient applauſes of the preſent *perverſe* and

crooked generation, yet a good-natured-kind of vanity would make me willing to enjoy the ſmiles and courteous ſpeeches of all around me, as we travel through life together!—Some periodical qualms of Modeſty would ſuggeſt that, *perhaps* I may never reach half way to the end of my hopes;—and convenience would whiſper in my ear with a trembling voice, that, fifty editions of my works *five hundred* years hence, will not ſatisfy the printer's demands upon me for the expences of this *firſt* impreſſion!

THOUGH theſe were my *ſecret* fears and apprehenſions, yet I would put the beſt face upon the matter, and boldly pronounce *æternitati pingo.* This would reſcue me at once; for upon this ground I might be able to vindicate not only the unlucky ſcene of the *horſewhip*, but every other blemiſh and irregularity, that might appear in my works; maintaining, that every

every *roughneſs* will be worn away by the revolution of ages; that leſſer and imperceptible Beauties will maturate into Perfection; that thoſe very parts which now appear *hideous* and *miſhapen*, are no other than bold and manly *Caricaturas*, which will ſoften into the moſt perfect *Symmetry*, when viewed from that point of perſpective, whence it was the original deſign they ſhould be chiefly contemplated.

THEREFORE only allow me, worthy Sir, to ſuppoſe that the various *Beauties* diſperſed through my productions, will carry me and my works through three or four generations *alive*;—as for a few *bruiſes* we ſhall neither of us mind them;—and I will warrant, that the *dubious* and *defective* parts will next come into play; and after having been kicked and trodden under foot for ages, *theſe* will begin to vegitate, exert their vigour, and ripen into *excellencies*.

THE

THE proceſs will undoubtedly be as follows. The beauties above ſuppoſed, will naturally excite a ſpirit of Envy amongſt brethren of the Quill; and you know Envy breeds captious Critics as certainly and as plentifully as Dunghills breed worms.—Theſe Critics will of courſe attack the *weaker* parts of my performance; amongſt the foremoſt of which my metamorphoſical *whip* is to be placed. *Here* then they will attempt to make a breach large enough to let out all the reputation I may have acquired. But fortunately, while theſe Gentry are thus aſpiring after fame by ſeeking my *deſtruction*, another party will find it their intereſt to riſe up in my *defence*. For, as ſoon as I ſhall be thought ſtrong enough to draw them on to immortality as they hang upon my ſkirts, may I not reaſonably expect that ſome few dozens of the Literati, long trammelled in the practice of *diſcovering*, or *creating* Beauties will be at my ſervice! *Then*, Sir, embelliſhed by their

Wit

Wit and Wiſdom ſhall that execrated necromantic Inſtrument gain me peculiar applauſe, and carry me forward on the expanded wings of Fame to never-fading honours!

I HAVE now put my cauſe into other hands, and you ſhall hear, Sir, how they plead it.

CLERICUS, will then be ſo charmed with the *excellent moral* of the piece, as to pardon little improprieties.

Aliquando bonus dormitat Buncleus,

ſays Clericus, but yet his very dreams are the rovings of a *great Mind.*

SPIRITUOSO, will largely expatiate upon the *ſpirit* and *animation* with which the different characters are delineated in this *nicromantic* ſtile, compared with the *dull, tame* method, a *vulgar* Genius would have followed,

lowed, of forming inſipid *conjectures* concerning each paſſenger.

DOGMATICUS, will piteouſly bemoan the *want of taſte* and abſolute *dulneſs* of thoſe who ſeem diſguſted at the low conceit of a *Horſe whip*; and out of the pure benevolence of his ſoul, he will expreſs a wiſh that theſe *pſeudo-critics* were well diſciplined with it for their folly!

PHLEGMATICUS, after having given a moſt minute and elaborate deſcription of a horſewhip, will propoſe a variety of Conjectures, wherefore the author preferred this Inſtrument of enchantment to every other moſt commonly uſed for the like purpoſes. Such as for example, *primo*, his being on horſeback, and on a long journey. Here he will compute the number of miles, Mr. Buncle travelled, and perhaps give a map of his tour. *Secondly*, he will conjecture, that Mr. Buncle was obliged to

uſe

uſe a whip, becauſe he was not able to purchaſe a pair of ſpurs. Under this head, he will maintain, that all the Sages of antiquity were *poor*. Perhaps he will ſummon us all to appear before him in proof of this aſſertion. *Thirdly*, he will remark, that this inſtrument moſt effectually ſecured the Employer from every ſuſpicion of being more than a common Traveller. And *fourthly*, that it enabled him from its *length*,—which he will find ways and means of knowing to the tenth part of an inch—to reach objects at a conſiderable diſtance. So very circumſtantial and elaborate will *Phlegmaticus* be under each of theſe particulars, defending and proving every thing he ſhall advance with ſuch a multiplicity of arguments, ſupported by numberleſs quotations from the beſt authorities, that if there be any ſuch thing as *truth*, it is a great chance but ſhe will lie ſomewhere among them.

My horſewhip will now have fully eſtabliſhed its Character; and from this period it will become the ſubject of more curious and *philoſophical* Diſquiſitions.

It is a diſputable point, ſays *Perplexus*, whether the inſtrument employed by our traveller and other Nicromancers, was a *medium* of power, centered in the immediate Agent, or an *emblem* of it; or laſtly, whether the Inſtrument itſelf, which is always the gift of ſome ſuperior Agent, does not *convey* this power, or virtue to the poſſeſſor; ſo that, whoever has the Inſtrument will enjoy the Power. What inclines me to the latter ſentiment, is, we find that Conjurors of every ſpecies are diſarmed when deprived of their myſtic Inſtrument; whereas were the Power and quality reſident in a particular Agent, why might it not iſſue from the extremity of his little finger, as well as from the end of his wand or rod? It is therefore my opinion, that

our

our travelling metamorphoſer did not exert his power *by* his whip merely, but that he actually derived it *from* his whip.

It ill becomes us, quoth *Modeſtus*, to decide upon ſubjects of this nature. A man ought himſelf to be a Conjuror to inveſtigate the nature of this power, or its *modus operandi*. The reaſonings of *Perplexus*, are not only inconcluſive, but they ſeem to me very improperly placed, as we have not *data* ſufficient to build our arguments upon.

Poor *Scepticus* indeed is quite of another mind. He finds himſelf unhinged and confounded by the arguments of *Perplexus*, but is yet encouraged by them to proceed further. And being of opinion, that it is the characteriſtic and eſſential attribute of *truth*, to render the mind *perplexed* and *confuſed*, he boldly ventures on in the dark, until he finally doubts whether

ther there *is*, ever *was*, or ever *can be*, ſuch a thing as a *Horſewhip* exiſting. What can conſtitute this ſuppoſed horſewhip of yours, quoth *Scepticus*? Its Eſſence neither lies in the *ſtock* or *handle*, nor in the *thong*, nor in the *cord* or *laſh* ſaid to be joined to the thong! Neither of theſe, *ſeparately*, were ever conſidered as the whip; and if not *ſeparately*, how can they be *conjointly*? If the whip does not exiſt *integrantly* in ſome one given part or point, it exiſts *no where*. For the idea of a whip is one *ſimple* idea, and therefore cannot be diffuſed over ſeveral parts of the ſubject. But it does *not* exiſt integrantly in any one given place; for if it did, the others could not be *eſſential* to the whip, nor indeed bear any relation to it; and you might imagine a complete horſewhip, without a *handle*, or without a *thong*, or without a *laſh*; that is, a Whip *complete* and *incomplete* at the ſame time:—which is abſurd! Therefore,

I con-

I conclude, ſays *Scepticus*, that there neither is, nor *can be* ſuch a thing as a horſe-whip; and that whatever has been aſſerted concerning this *imaginary* Being, *nicromantic* or *not*, is equally fantaſtic and fabulous.

RATIONALIS, is not fond of writing upon a ſubject which appears ſo trivial; yet he judiciouſly obſerves, that things trifling in themſelves may be rendered momentous by the raſh conjectures, or hazardous concluſions drawn from them. He cannot forbear expreſſing a wiſh that *Perplexus* and others, would give themſelves the trouble to *ſtudy* their authors before they comment upon them. He enquires, does not the ſentimental Traveller himſelf *diſclaim* all dealings with the devil in the ſtrongeſt terms? Does he not clearly intimate, that his power is *ſelf derived?* How then could it be imparted to him by any other? Indeed he ſays, adds Rationalis, that ſome *Dæmon, either of wiſdom or of folly*, &c. tempted me to turn conjuror; but this is

no

no other than a *Proſopopœa*, or *Perſonification* of the Characters of *Wiſdom* and *Folly*, which from the pernicious or beneficial influence they have in the world, may juſtly be compared to *good* or *bad Dæmons*. He talks, it is true, of turning Conjuror. But this is a mere *Jeu d'eſprit*, and can indicate nothing more than that he preferred this whimſical method of delineating characters, to any other: and ſince Conjurors always made uſe of ſome inſtrument, as a medium of their power, he, in conformity to this cuſtom, profeſſed to have changed his riding whip into ſuch an inſtrument of incantation. This celebrated whip therefore, is no other than a pretended medium, of his pretended and aſſumed power, to diſcover the genuine characters of the paſſengers on the road, through every falſe diſguiſe. But had he really profeſſed himſelf a Conjuror—which he does not, — this Whip could no more *conſtitute* him one, as *Perplexus* abſurdly ſuggeſts, than the *ſtaff* conſtitutes the

the *Conſtable*, the *truncheon* the *General*, or the *Sceptre* the *King*; for ſurely the *ſymbol* is very different from the *ſource* of power!

As to the arguments of *Scepticus*, ſubjoins *Rationalis*, they prove ſo much, that even the *truth of his own exiſtence* is in danger from the force of them.

After all, continues *Rationalis*, I am not thoroughly ſatisfied with the fancy of the Whip.—There is ſomething in it that offends.—I wiſh it had been omitted.—Perhaps the whole is an interpolation of ſome later writer. We muſt patiently wait till farther diſcoveries ſhall throw light upon this intricate ſubject.

I am convinced, ſays *Emblematicus*, after he has turned, and twined, and twiſted my whip ten thouſand different ways,—that the inſtrument, employed by our nicromantic traveller, was preferred upon account of its being an *emblem* of the agent's ſkill; which

which ſkill as plainly conſiſts in the diſcernment of characters; or, in other words, in a *knowledge of the world* And a moſt beautiful emblem it is! For as he that knows the world, cannot avoid being *ſatirical* in his remarks upon it; ſo there is ſomething pertinently ſatirical in the choice and even *name* of this inſtrument. For example, by a *Horſewhip*, *unruly beaſts* are diſciplined to obedience. *A knowledge of the world*, which implies a knowledge of human nature, which again implies a knowledge of ourſelves, enables us to ſubdue *our own unruly paſſions*, by ſome philoſophers emphatically called the *brute*. A good travelling Whip is of uſe *to open the gates* on the road. Thus the *knowledge of the world* is of the utmoſt uſe in removing the various *obſtacles* and *bars* to our happineſs, that we may meet with in our paſſage through life.—A good Horſewhip is an excellent weapon of defence againſt the attacks of *foot-pads*, *highwaymen*, and *barking dogs*: in like manner will the *knowledge*

ledge of the world enable us to knock down, if any thing can, the *flagrant villany* of mankind, or ſmartly chaſtiſe their *impertinence!*

ALLEGORICUS is well pleaſed with a hint of ſuch importance; yet he envies *Emblematicus* the honour of it. The above explanation of this curious paſſage concerning the whip of conjuration, ſays *Allegoricus*, appears to me extremely defective. Suppoſe, for the *knowledge of the world*, we were to ſubſtitute the *means of acquiring this knowledge*, viz. *Obſervation* and *Experience*, the allegory will in every reſpect be more complete. For as the *natural whip*, altho' it be but *one* inſtrument or weapon, conſiſteth of *two* principal parts, viz. the Stock or Handle, and the Laſh, thus the faculty of forming a proper eſtimate of human life, tho' one faculty, yet it is the reſult of *two* principles, *Obſervation* and *Experience*. Now let us obſerve

the very ſtriking analogy that there is between this power or faculty, and the *emblematical* inſtrument that diſplays it. *Phlegmaticus* acquaints us, in his *conciſe abridgement of Britiſh antiquities*, (ſee vol. 8. fol. edit. page 934.) that the Stem or Handle of the *natural* whip, was made of long pieces or ſlips of whalebone, or ſome ſuch ſupple and elaſtic ſubſtance, cloſely bound and compacted together with cat-gut (a particular ſpecies of thin cord) ſo as to make one firm, ſolid, body. Thus may the handle of this *myſtic* whip be ſuppoſed to conſiſt of a *congeries of obſervations* properly ranged, and cloſely compacted together by *thought* and *reflection*. The Laſh, *Phlegmaticus* tells us, conſiſted of ſeveral ſlips of the ſkins or hides of animals, twiſted hard together, and terminating in a number of cutting knots. How juſt, how beautiful a repreſentation this of the *hard twiſts* and *cutting knots* of experience! which experience may alſo be ſaid in an *analogico-metaphorico*

taphorico-allegorical ſenſe, to be made out of *ourſelves*, our *very bodies*, or, if you pleaſe, OUR OWN HIDES! How *ſimple*, and yet how *grand*, how *elegant* and yet how *ſublime* the idea!

THUS, worthy Sir, according to the natural progreſs of Criticiſm, beginning at *vindication*, proceeding to *admiration*, from thence to *veneration*, and ſo on to *emblemization* and *allegorization*, ſhall this whimſical inſtrument be held up to Poſterity as an epitome of all Wiſdom and Knowledge; and whatever other vagaries had been played with it, they would no longer have been conſidered as trifling and puerile, but as conveying ſome very uſeful inſtruction or ingenious moral!

BUT, if the ſpirit of prophecy fail me not, ſtill greater honours await my Horſe-whip! Permit me, oh permit me, to anticipate the bleſſing!—for, unleſs I have a

taſte now of that Immortality I am to enjoy after my death,—I fear I ſhall grow indifferent about the matter!

AT that illuſtrious period, when *Poſterity* ſhall have the ſame reverence for us, their Anceſtors, as we entertain for *ours*!—When We who are now abuſing each other, as a profligate race of mortals, ſhall be held forth as patterns of every virtue that can adorn humanity!—When our oaths, knaveries and debaucheries ſhall be heard, ſeen, and felt no more; while the few good deeds of a few individuals, magnified by the miſts of ages, ſhall be contemplated with admiration, as ſpecimens of the whole race!—When the brightneſs of our characters ſhall even reflect a luſtre upon every thing around us!—When the equipage of our tea-tables ſhall rival *Etruſcan Vaſes* in the eſtimation of every true Antiquarian!—When a ſingle *quarter-guinea* ſhall be ſold for ten times its ſterling value,

lue, becauſe it is become uſeleſs thro' the ſtoppage of its circulation; and a *Birmingham-halfpenny*, ſhall be a moſt invaluable treaſure, becauſe the rope has cleared the world of thoſe that caſt them!—When the *Grecian tripods* ſhall give place to our *braſs-kettles*, *gridirons* and *tongs!*—When *Buckets*, *Bruſhes* and *Brooms*, ſhall no longer be kicked about the houſe as nuiſances by lordly huſbands, nor be brought from their dark corners as neceſſary evils, by the induſtrious Houſewife, but be preſerved as relics of high eſteem, and of the utmoſt moment in ſolving a great variety of curious and intereſting queſtions, concerning our lotions, lavements, purifications, &c. When *chamber-utenſils* themſelves ſhall be contemplated with rapturous veneration!—At this glorious period ſhall the reputation, my moral, emblematical, allegorical Whip may have gained, confer a dignity upon the whole race of whips! The different kinds of them uſed in the *eighteenth* cen-

tury, ſhall now become a ſubject of the moſt ſerious and inquiſitive attention! Thoſe various aſſortments which, in our perverſe and incurious generation, would never have been taken out of a whip-maker's ſhop, but to be employed to the common purpoſes of life, ſhall then be ſpread before the learned World, with a moſt ſcrupulous exactneſs! Antiquarians ſhall divert their paſſion from Rings, Medals, Bronzes, Inſcriptions, and Horſeſhoes, to the love of Whips! They ſhall acquire different degrees of renown, according to the diſcoveries they ſhall have made concerning the Genus, Species, Shape, Size, and Uſes of all the inſtruments of *flagellation*, from the *Coachman*'s commanding weapon to the puny *flagellum* of the *puny infant!* At this bright æra ſhall a man be held in eſtimation according to the depth of his ſkill, in the faſhionable ſcience; or the variety of ſpecimens he may fortunately have in his poſſeſſion! Learned and pious Divines

ſhall

ſhall ſuſpend their cure of ſouls to inveſtigate this more intereſting ſubject! Princes and Potentates ſhall beggar their treaſures to grace their cabinets with an *original* Whip! Various conjectures ſhall be continually propoſed, and queſtions learnedly agitated concerning the *flagellum* uſed by *us antients*, when we travelled on Horſeback, when we drove a Waggon, a Cart, a Chaiſe, a Coach, a Phaeton, a Chariot, a Buggy, or a Time-whiſky; when we whipt our School-boys, and when our School-boys whipt their tops! Fierce contentions and dire debates ſhall follow theſe conjectures! Civil commotions and general wars ſhall terminate the diſpute!

Oh præclara dies, præclara dies!

LETTER XVII.

A RHAPSODY.

Oh how can you renounce the boundleſs ſtore
Of charms, which nature to her votaries yields?
The warbling woodlands, the reſounding ſhore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of field,
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And, all that echoes to the ſong of Eve,
All that the mountain's ſhelt'ring boſom ſhields,
And all the dreadful majeſty of heaven,
Oh how can you renounce, and hope to be forgiven!

The MINSTREL.

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LETTER XVII.

Stow Gardens, Auguſt 4, 1769.

To Maria.

THE many civilities we had received from the friendly family at *Buckingham*, made it incumbent upon Charles and myſelf to teſtify our acknowledgments. We agreed therefore to invite the whole company to ſpend a day with us at *Stow*. Yeſterday was the time appointed. Our entertainment was as elegant as our Landlady, with the aid of two Batchelors, could make it. I ſhall paſs over the incidents of the day, which, though it was chearfully ſpent, contained nothing worthy of communicating. The Evening ſcene may perhaps amuſe you.

THE evening was remarkably calm and ſerene. Some gentle ſhowers which fell in the courſe of the day, had abundantly ſatisfied the thirſty earth, and agreeably cooled the heated atmoſphere; while the powerful rays of the ſun had ſo far exhaled the ſuperabundant moiſture, as to enable us to walk with pleaſure and ſafety upon the terras, or in the path-ways of the garden. Our company unanimouſly reſolved to embrace the opportunity, and take their laſt farewel of theſe delightful regions. It was farther agreed, that we ſhould drink tea in *Nelſon's ſeat:* which ſcheme was eaſily put into execution, as we were upon the moſt friendly terms with his Lordſhip's domeſtics, who obligingly provided us with all the neceſſary equipage of the tea-table.

Nelſon's ſeat, my dear, is a light elegant building, in the form of a receſs, being entirely open at the entrance. It is ornamented

mented with various paintings and inſcriptions, and is ſituated towards the north-eaſt front of the manſion-houſe. By this ſituation a view of the garden indeed is in great meaſure intercepted, but then in return, we are preſented with a moſt extenſive and variegated proſpect into the adjacent country.

THOUGH the weather had been peculiarly favourable ſince our departure from London, and Nature ſeemed uniformly diſpoſed to pleaſe us, yet ſhe appeared to have dreſſed herſelf in her beſt array upon the preſent occaſion. Like Maria, Celia, or Delia, or any other nymph of liquid name, who, upon the proſpect of bidding adieu to her lover, calls forth every charm, that ſhe may the more effectually impreſs her dear image upon his heart, and augment his regret at the fatal abſence.

To the numberleſs beauties which preſent themſelves to the view in a ſummer's evening, after refreſhing ſhowers, was ſuperadded *one* Maria, which I have not often ſeen, and which a painter, from its being ſo unuſual, would perhaps ſcarcely have the courage to deſcribe. The declining ſun, by reflecting his rays horizontally, upon the drops of rain, or rather thick dew, which ſtill hung upon the graſs, formed as beautiful an *iris*, or if you pleaſe, *rainbow* upon the ground, as I ever beheld. Charles called it the *Egret* of nature, and vowed he thought her rather too coquetiſh, that evening; though for his life he could not help falling in love with her, as you will ſee in the ſequel.

Now, my Maria, do I long to be a Poet indeed, for then would I paint in ſmootheſt numbers and deſcriptive verſe, the enchanting ſcenes which engaged our attention. I would celebrate the fertile meadows

dows and the verdant lawns, laden with fruits, adorned with ten thouſand different tints and hews of refreſhing green, and beſprinkled with enlivening flowers. I would celebrate the wild muſicians of the air, wharbling their ſongs of contentment and of love; — the woods and groves, which, while they ſpread a melancholy dignity over the face of nature, ſooth the imagination with ideal ſhade and peaceful retirement. Nor ſhould yon flowing River flow unſung; whoſe gentle ſtream, by benevolently meandering in its courſe, diffuſes its bleſſings over a more extenſive and delighted tract of country!

My friend Charles, of whoſe peculiar turn of mind I have already given you ſome ſpecimens, was again wound up to an agreeable pitch of enthuſiaſm; and his volatile ſpirits, if I may expreſs myſelf in chymical language, ſeemed in a high ſtate of ſublimation. It may be that I am ſomewhat

what partial to my friend's extemporaneous paintings; but, although there is a hardneſs of feature in them, and ſometimes a great *want* of *keeping*, yet I think there is generally a warm glow of colouring and juſtneſs of character. Indeed, he does not affect *elegance* ſo much as *ſtrength*. *He ſpeaks* juſt as he *thinks* and *feels*, without waiting for method or ſearching for terms, that might give greater uniformity and grace to his language. This defect naturally makes his deſcriptions appear unfiniſhed; and there will often be, in the ſame ſentence, inſtances of true ſublimity, mixt with an improper familiarity of expreſſion. I ſhall however give you the ſubſtance of his harrangue, as upon a former occaſion, ſo far as I can recollect it, without attempting any alterations or corrections.

After ſtanding for ſome time with his arms folded, in a kind of reverie, as if he was laying up from the book of nature a rich

ſtore

ſtore of ideas, for his rhapſodical declamation, he abruptly burſts forth in the following manner, much to the ſurpriſe and delight, and I hope, edification of his liſtening auditory, who were gathered round the tea-table.

" How dull, how *dead* are the feelings of thoſe who have no reliſh for the Beauties which Nature exhibits! How *ſophiſticated* and debauched is the taſte of that man, who prefers the conceits of *art*, and the little baby ornaments of *human invention*, to the enchanting objects *Creation* preſents to our aſtoniſhed ſight! What are your fluted column of Compoſite or Corinthian order, with their baſis and pedeſtal, their architrave, frieze, and corniſh, to yon bold and irregular Hill, that is of *no order at all!* What is the noiſy Concert, though aided by the caſtrated voice of a *Tenducci*, to the ſweet though wild and irregular harmony of the *Groves!* And as to thoſe beauteous

teous flowers;—not Solomon in all his glory, nor either of Solomon's miſtreſſes, nor the vaineſt Belle that ever frequented an aſſembly, ſince the days of Solomon, were ever arrayed like one of theſe! Yon Sun in his ſplendour, and his mild conſort the Moon, when ſhe modeſtly diffuſes her ſilver rays in the abſence of her huſband, how do they infinitely ſurpaſs your lamps and your torches! What more than orient gems hang on this dewy graſs, reflecting all the colours of the priſm! Oh could they be *conſolidated*, and rendered *ſcarce*, how would your fine Ladies, whether Miſtreſſes, Wives, or Concubines, move heaven and earth to move their huſbands lovers and gallants to purchaſe them!

Ye that value yourſelves as the firſt of the beaumonde, and are courted as the ſtandards of *elegance* and *taſte*, why do you not bring your admirers *here?* But flies and

and moths dance round a *candle*, none but *Eagles* ſoar towards the *ſun!*

WHAT can be the reaſon, continues Charles, turning towards me, that perſons who have it in their power to walk with *Nature*, ſhould be ſo fond of *artificial* life? That they ſhould immerſe themſelves in the cares and dangers of the metropolis; bid adieu to every natural enjoyment, and ſubmit to ten thouſand inconveniences unknown to the meaneſt peaſant; patiently live in places but one remove from a priſon, confined in narrow courts and ſtreets, and like ſoldiers at a review, diſputing with each other every inch of ground!

WERE the *eſſential bleſſings of life* to be found in greater perfection there;—was London the only place for a *brewery of the chryſtal ſtream*;—could they *wire draw ſun beams* in the metropolis alone, or *interweave Health, Peace, and Innocence in the web of life*,

life, then their crowding in ſuch multitudes to the place, would be deemed a natural inſtinct, and might plead its own apology! But how riſible is the folly of men, in deſpiſing the common beauties of nature, which are ſo *eſſential* to the enjoyment of all, and which all *may* enjoy, in order to indulge ſome ſervile or headſtrong paſſion, or poſſeſs ſome fantaſtic conceit of art!"

TRUE, ſaid I, but who is there to laugh at them, my friend? Laughter you know is a ſocial gratification, and ſuch multitudes commit or approve of the folly, that there is ſcarcely a number left to maintain the laugh againſt them.

"PROVIDENCE, continues Charles, without paying any attention to my remark, Providence deals among her children what ſhe deems *bleſſings* with an *impartial* hand. Vigorous Health, a Heart at eaſe, cheary Innocence, the moderate indulgence of every

every Appetite and Affection in its place; theſe are the Goods ſhe makes us heirs to, and with theſe we might all be happy. But ſome officious Perſonage, whom I take to be the *Devil* in the form of a *Merchant*,—with all due reſpect be it ſpoken—ſcatters *gewgaws* and *trinkets* in the midſt of us, under a pretext of *ſuperadding* to our enjoyment, forſooth! Away we go like very children and Boobies! To it we fall, helter ſkelter, pellmell! One throws away his *bread* and *butter*, to ſeize a piece of *gilt gingerbread*;—another gets a *halfpenny trumpet* and a *black-eye*;—a third picks up a *doll*, with the loſs of his *noſe*; — this little gentleman is confoundedly ſcratched; but he lays hold of a *rattle* to quiet him;—and that gets nothing but *fiſtycuffs* for his forwardneſs, and goes ſobbing off the ſtage, complaining that he has not had fair play;—yon unlucky boy would break his playmates neck to wreſt a *penny* from him,

and

and this will wade up to the chin in *dirt*, for half the money!"

But, my good friend, you have the bleſſings of *Sociability* in large cities; a man you know is a *ſocial* creature.

"Sociability! According to the genuine idea of the word, they know but very little of it. If *intereſt* beckons them to your houſe with her little finger, ſhe need not beckon twice; and they will treat, with all the cordiality, a family dinner, and a bottle of wine can expreſs, the man whom they ſecretly *deteſt*, provided they expect ſome advantage from him on the ſcore of *trade*; — for a *friend* in their dictionary always ſignifies one that is, or may become a *cuſtomer*. Nor do they dream of enquiring farther for his character and qualifications, than of his Agent or Banker. Thus far they are ſociable if you pleaſe. But in moſt other caſes they are much too

buſy

buſy to think of Friendſhip. The plodding Merchant will ſcarcely ſteal a moment from his ledger, and day-book, and letters, and notes, and caſh-bags, to ſhake hands with the moſt intimate companion of his youth; tho' he were juſt eſcaped from a ſhipwreck, fire, or a bankruptcy!— The neareſt neighbour is as much at a loſs for your name, as if you were his antipode: and thoſe who lodge in the ſame houſe, ſeem to have made a vow of ſulky ſuſpicion, the moment they entered the doors. I have dwelt for upwards of five years under one roof with a gentleman, from whom I could never extort any thing more, than *your humble Servant Sir*, when we accidentally met upon the ſtair caſe, and away he ran, as if he was in haſte to give his ſpeech the lie!"

WHAT think you of London then as the *School of Virtue?* Says *Fanny*, laughingly.

" As

" As the *teſt* of virtue you mean Miſs; For I am perſuaded that the ſame quantity of virtuous reſolutions, as would ſecure the ſalvation of *twenty countrymen*, will ſcarcely keep a *Londoner* out of the way of miſchief for a ſingle fortnight! His luxurious manner of living heightens his paſſions to the utmoſt degree of inflammability; he is daily expoſed to ten thouſand objects, by which they may take fire, without the aſſiſtance of thoſe only checks to vice, an hour of ſober reflection, or an attention to *character* to damp or extinguiſh the flame! What can we reaſonably expect favorable to genuine morality, in a place where a man may be a *Divine* at one end of the town, and a *Dancing maſter* at the other? The chief pillar of a church, and the main ſupport of an *infamous houſe* at the ſame inſtant? Oh it is the heaven of Knaves, Libertines, and Hypocrites!"

BUT, my dear Sir, there is not a ſpot where perſons are more attentive to *character*, even in minuter actions, than in the *Metropolis*.

" That is true, to *minuter* articles they are abſolutely ſlaves; and theſe are the only reſtraints they know. Harmleſs mirth and inoffenſive freedoms, are proſcribed without mercy, and almoſt without exception. It is infinitely eaſier for a man to loſe his character for a *trifling* action, than for a *criminal* one. Were either of us to whiſtle or ſing in the ſtreets; were we to walk with our wigs in our hands in ſultry weather, inſtead of our hats, or in ſhort to deviate in any inſtance from the eſtabliſhed punctilios of the place, we are ruined for ever, as far as public opinion can ruin us: nor could all the wiſdom, learning, or virtue which were ever centered in one man, ſcreen us from contempt. The only chance to avoid diſgrace, would be to paſs for *Bucks and Bloods*, to ſwear we were *drunk*; to

break a few lamps,—bilk a coachman,—tip over a helpleſs watchman; — and then we might gain a number of reſpectable partizans, who would ſet down our conduct to the ſcore of a *frolick*, and invite us to reſume our places in the rank of Rationals!"

THESE are inconveniences, ſays I, which naturally attend large Cities; and yet you know that Trade and Commerce, the grand ſupports of the nation, are beſt carried on there.

"WELL, quoth Charles, as to thoſe gold digging Slaves, I will not now litigate their title to being uſeful members of ſociety. If they be, I heartily give them joy. May they become as rich as *Midas*, without his ears, and as happy as they are rich! In the mean time, I am ſorry that while they are the pillars of a trading nation,—the ſources of its wealth and grandeur,—the very milk and juices of its elegances;—

gances,—I am ſorry that they ſhould ſacrifice ſo much of their own tranquility and enjoyment, and forego every real and natural bleſſing of life, in order to maintain ſo reſpectable a character! For as to *themſelves*, they generally make a moſt deſperate plunge at their firſt ſetting out, if *happineſs* be their purſuit, and conſume the beſt of their years in fatal *croſs purpoſes!* They are ſo anxious about the *means* of enjoyment, as to leave no time for the enjoyment itſelf! They wiſely ſpend all their days, in procuring a *competency* for life! Nay, become the *meaneſt* and moſt *abject ſlaves*, in order to render themſelves *independent!* — *Sweat* and *toil*, that they may poſſeſs an *eaſy fortune!*—Expoſe themſelves to ten thouſand inconveniences, ſtraits, and hazards, to be above the fear of want! Refuſe every genuine bleſſing of life, that they may enjoy, or rather *poſſeſs* its *luxuries!* What ſay you to the Wiſdom and Policy of the man, who will ſpend *twelve* or *ſix-*

teen hours of the day in a *confined, gloomy* counting houſe, that he may eat his meals, or his lady entertain her company, in a *faſhionable dining room?* — Paſs the whole day in labors worſe than mechanic, hard labors of the head and heart, in order to loll the few minutes of his leiſure in an *eaſy chair*, or repoſe on an elegant *ſopha?* Sentence himſelf to town-apartments, ſickly and gloomy as the *Baſtile*, that he may viſit his *country-houſe* on a *ſunday?* — Suffer his mind to be upon the rack of cares and anxious ſuſpence, that he may lie on a bed of *down*, and draw *ſilken* curtains around it?"

BUT are not the *pleaſures* of the town a ſufficient apology for the love of it?

"I SHALL not pretend to rectify the *taſte* of the *man of pleaſure*. His *Morals* muſt be firſt rectified, which is a taſk too difficult for me to attempt. I ſhall content myſelf with

with pitying and deſpiſing the mortal, who is ſuch a ſtranger to his own dignity, and enemy to his own happineſs, as to ſacrifice the refined pleaſures he is capable of enjoying, from the cultivation of benevolent and virtuous affections,—from the contemplation of Nature, — that inexhauſtible fund of the pureſt enjoyment, — from the healthy invigorating amuſements of a country life, for the turbid pleaſures of a *tavern* or a *brothil!* Nor, although I am not inſenſible to the charms of *muſic*, do I think it worth his while to bear the confuſed diſcords of that tumultuous place, in order to be upon the ſpot for a concert, or an opera! And as to that moſt rational amuſement the *Theatre*, I think he might well ſupply its loſs in the country, with a little dexterous management, without foregoing every *natural* pleaſure to poſſeſs it. Let him promote *mirth* and *good humour* by his own fire-ſide, and it will do his heart more good than a *Comedy!* Let him in-

dulge his *finer feelings*, by ſympathiſing with the diſtreſſes of his fellow-creatures, and rejoicing to relieve them, and he will poſſeſs a more genuine ſatisfaction than in applauding the nobleſt ſentiment, or dropping a tear over *fictitious miſery!* — The one is merely an agreeable agitation of his paſſions; *the other, while it ſtirs the pool, applies its healing virtues alſo!*"

I AM perſuaded, Maria, you will agree with me, that there is an agreeable mixture of good ſenſe and extravagance in this Rhapſody. I do not think that every thing my friend aſſerts is literally true, and yet I think it would be much happier for mankind were they more of his opinion.

Adieu,

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

THE INVITATION.

Yes, thank my ſtars, as early as I knew,
This town, I had the ſenſe to hate it too.

DONNE.

LETTER XVIII.

Stow, Auguſt 5, 1769.

CHARLES's ſermon, ſurely, deſerves a hymn: and I know not whether I ſhould not have been tempted to have given you one of my own compoſing, had I not very fortunately in my pocket book ſome few ſtaves well adapted to the occaſion. The author, whoever he was, ſeems like one of us, averſe to a city life; though condemned for his ſins to paſs his days in town. Yet he appears willing to make the beſt of his ſtation, and wear with an air of gaiety, like Macheath in the Beggar's Opera, the chains he cannot throw off. He has manifeſtly that ſweet paſtoral ballad of Shenſtone in view,

'Ye Shepherds ſo cheerful and gay,'

tho' it by no means amounts to a parody, ſcarcely to an imitation.

BEFORE I tranſcribe this *City paſtoral*, I cannot forbear mentioning one obſervation which the peruſal of it naturally ſuggeſts. As Towns and Cities are wholly artificial, and the manner of living in them is a total deviation from the plan of nature; thus every attempt to celebrate, in verſe, the purſuits and employments of that ſtate, or to delineate the objects which ſurround it, inevitably degenerates into burleſque. We dare not mention, at leaſt we dare not particulariſe, the articles that charm us in artificial life. Thoſe circumſtances which engage all our care, and for which thouſands deprive themſelves of every natural enjoyment, deſtroy their health, or it may be proſtitute their beſt principles, have not dignity enough in them to bear a recital! Whereas *natural* objects are uniformly pleaſing. Here the moſt trivial circumſtances

ſtances are not void of beauty; and the ſmalleſt incidents become important. The wildeſt flower, or moſt inſignificant weed, the bed of an ant, a fly meandering in the ſun, or on the ſurface of a brook, are ca-capable of forming pleaſing images in *rural* painting, and ſerve by their very ſimplicity to adorn the picture. So conſonant is the very frame and compoſition of man to a rural ſtate!

AN INVITATION TO TOWN, IN PASTORAL VERSE.

PART I.

DOMESTIC COMFORTS.

I.

MY Cloe I prithee give ear,
To Oppidon's city-taught lay,
And ſurely you cannot forbear,
Such beauties his Muſe will diſplay.

II.

No Meadows bedeckt with ſweet flowers,
No Streams that flow murmuring by,
No ſhady Retreats or ſnug Bowers,
No Landſcapes that gladden the eye;

III.

No Sheep by the ſide of a hill,
No Cattle that low in the dale,
No Shepherd with muſical ſkill,
Delighting the nymphs of the vale;

No

IV.

No Birds that rejoice on the ſpray,
Nor Beetles that buzz in the ear,
No Owl at the cloſe of the day,
Nor Trout in the river ſo clear;

V.

No ſcenes ſimple Nature can yield,
Entice you again to my arms:
Tho' great are the joys of the FIELD,
Much greater are fair LONDON's charms.

VI.

The bleſſings for you we prepare,
Which all rural bleſſings excel,
Your Oppidon begs you to ſhare,
And bid the rude country farewel.

VII.

My windows, they once were ſo thick,
With the dirt as to ſhut out the ray;
But now they are waſhed by Dick,
And look as tranſparent as day!

VIII.

For you I've been ſcouring each grate,
And made all my furniture ſhine;
Bright chairs all ranged in ſtate;
And tables with poliſh divine!

IX.

The beds have been all taken down,
And every bug has been ſlain;
And our active Upholſterer Browne,
Has quickly replaced them again!

X.

My walls with gay paper are hung!
New Carpets are ſpread on each floor!
Away all the *old* mats are flung,
And *new* ones are placed at each door!

XI.

From the Vampers my paintings are come!
My Prints are new framed and glazed!
My Paroquet's cage is brought home,
And its turrets will make you amazed!

XII.

Each mirror is hung in its place;
Their frames are all burniſh'd anew;
But they ne'er can reflect a *fair* face,
Until they are fronted by you!

XIII.

My ſide-board of Plate, with the ſpoons,
In elegant order are plac'd!
My curtains I've hung in feſtoons,
And with fringes, and toſſels they're graced!

One

XIV.

One evil we cannot prevent;
My rooms are as gloomy as night;
Yet the *air degagé* of a tent,
Will give us ſubſtantial delight!

XV.

I have purchas'd a gift my ſweet ſoul:
It coſt me eight guineas, and more;
'Tis a fine and a large *gerondole*,
Moſt ſplendidly gilded all o'er!

XVI.

And I've bought you a large *mandarine!*
Two vaſes of fine China-ware!
Dogs, Cows, and Owls—fit for a *Queen!*
But theſe I'll reſerve for my *Fair!*

XVII.

Your Toilet the graces have dreſt,
By the hands of *Sal*, *Betty*, and *Moll.*
'Tis the *altar of Venus* confeſt,
And I've made it as fine as a *doll.*

XVIII.

O'er the table's a ſtole of milk white.
Such neatneſs is equall'd by few!
The corners ſilk ribbands bind tight:
Its borders are furbelow'd too!

Around

XIX.

Around all the trinkets are laid!
In the centre they've ſtation'd the glaſs;
'Tis as fine as a crucifix made,
And you'll look like a Prieſt at high maſs!

XX.

Such ſervice does Venus require!
And ſure there's no hardſhip in this,
To dreſs up your charms higher and higher,
And view them with rapturous bliſs!

XXI.

Thus our manſion, my love, is prepared,
For a feſtival, drum, or a rout:
And I long to compoſe a fine card,
And ſend our dreſt Valet about!

XXII.

The lamps ſhall burn bright on the ſtairs!
Wax candles our rooms ſhall adorn!
Our curtains, and ſilk damaſk chairs,
Uncover'd, ſhall rival the morn!

XXIII.

How delightful it will be to ſee,
The faces we ne'er ſaw before!
How delighted, my dear, ſhall we be,
To ſee thoſe ſweet faces no more!

XXIV.

We will talk, and we'll flatter away,
As if we were friends all alone!
We will earneſtly preſs them to ſtay—
And cordially wiſh they were gone!

XXV.

The *high-headed* Dames of Tower-hill,
And the *ſtay-ſtiffen'd* ladies, Miſs Mores,
Shall ſet themſelves down to quadrille;
Killing time with the four matadores!

XXVI.

Miſs *Dimple*, Sir *Charles*, and Miſs *Twiſt*,
With me their enraptured hoſt,
We will form a ſnug party at whiſt,
And game till our tempers are loſt!

PART II.

CITY FELICITY.

XXVII.

SUCH joys in my *houſe* do appear!
For pleaſures like theſe you will long!
And yet I can tell you, my dear,
One half of my joys are not ſung!

XXVIII.

The *Town*, it is ſurely improved!
It is grown yet more blithſome and gay!
Oh it is to recal whom it loved,
Tho' it could not entice you to ſtay!

XXIX.

Old-clothes-men have mellow'd their notes;
Young *Sweep*, and the *Milk-boy*, excel!
Small-coal-girls, are tearing their throats!
You'd be charm'd with their ſcreaming ſo well!

XXX.

The *Silverſmith's* hammer and forge,
The *Claſp-maker's* blocks are all new;
And did I feel jealouſy's ſcourge,
I ſhould ſwear they are beating for *you!*

XXXI.

Yon *Copperſmith's* clamorous folk,
They merit, your Cits loudeſt lays!
But the *Din* that they make at each ſtroke,
Would drown all the ecchoes of praiſe!

XXXII.

The waters that ſtand by my door,
Or as ſplaſhed by wheels in my face,
Refreſh me ſo much, that no more
Do I wiſh the ſweet *Ooze* in their place!

What

XXXIII.

What tho' they abound not with *fiſh*,
You will ſee better ſtores in their ſtead;
(To feed the ſtreet-poor, with a diſh)
Gliding greens, bits of *pudding*, and *bread!*

XXXIV.

With *you* the Sun burns in a rage,
And the ſwain for a ſhelter repines;
His fury our fogs ſo aſſuage:
We ſcarcely can tell that he ſhines!

XXXV.

Or ſhould he exert all his ire,
Should you long for a cooler retreat;
To ſome narrrow-lane we'll retire,
Where his godſhip, has never ſhone yet!

XXXVI.

Oh boaſt not the air of the Down,
With the ſweet ſcented peas of the fields!
Come breathe but the air of this Town!
How *envied* the fragrance it yields!

XXXVII.

Sweet odours exhale from each *ſtall*,
Each *Butcher's* and *Cheeſe-monger's ſhop*;
Sweet odours exhale from each *wall*,
Where incontinent paſſengers ſtop!

Away

XXXVIII.

Away with your ſhrubs and your flowers!
Away with your hyacinth bed!
Away with your jeſſamine bowers!
And give me theſe ſcents in their ſtead!

XXXIX.

Our Merchants when met at the 'Change,
Exceed all your hummings of bees!
Ten thouſands of hives in a range,
Cannot make ſuch a humming as theſe!

XL.

The *luſt-labour'd* ſongs in the ſtreet,
How they laugh at your muſic of birds!
Your melody true, it is ſweet,
But then it is *ſound* without words!

XLI.

Come wander with me to *St. Paul's*,
When Cynthia juſt peeps through the fog,
And attend to the muſical ſqualls,
Of *Thomas*, *Sal*, *Harry*, and *Mog*!

XLII.

What *Sentiments* flow from their lips!
What crowds to theſe oracles run!
The poiſon each ſervant Maid ſips,
And in leſs than a week, ſhe's undone!

Thou

XLIII.

Thou woodlark, thou linnet, and thruſh,
Can ye boaſt ſuch atchievements as theſe?
When ye warble your notes in each buſh,
What do you but warble and pleaſe?

XLIV.

But hark! what a ſound ſtrikes my ear!
Caſcades are ſure falling a down!
Are the boiſt'rous waves rolling near?
'Tis the noiſe of this boiſt'rous town!

XLV.

Behold a tumultuous throng,
(Exceeding your herds on the heath,)
To ſee the Lord Mayor drag'd along,
Are preſſing each other to death!

XLVI.

See hundreds of boys in the ſtreets,
At the heels of a mad-driven beaſt!
How he toſſes each one that he meets,
And makes charming ſport for the reſt!

XLVII.

A coachman is ſtriving in vain
To paſs by a rattling dray;
But alas! they're both jamm'd in a lane,
And they ſwear they will neither give way.

XLVIII.

A pickpocket, yonder is caught!
And this very ſcrupulous crew,
Think the young criminal, ought,
T' enjoy a good ducking or two!

XLIX.

Three Felons are bound in a cart,
And muſt ſuffer for ills they have done:
Their diſtreſs it would break a *weak* heart,
But with *us* it is matter of *fun!*

L.

The mob, who will brook no delay,
Are kicking about an old hat;
Or they ſweetly decoy time away,
By toſſing a dog or a cat!

LI.

The Ladies too, curious to ſee,
With eagerneſs drive to the place:
And ſhe who gets neareſt the tree,
Diſcovers moſt joy in her face!

LII.

Oh, theſe are delectable ſcenes,
In your quiet village, unknown!
You never collect on your greens,
But to dance, and to ſkip up and down!

At

LIII.

At night when you ruſtics retire,
To ſleep a moſt tractable prey,
W——'s, rogues, cries of watchmen and fire,
With *us*, drive the dreamer away!

LIV.

Tell the nymphs when you bid them adieu,
That their rural joys are a joke;
That they're not ſo happy as you,
To live in noiſe, riot, and ſmoke!

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

A CHARACTER.

Diſputationem facetiis tenet.

TER.

LETTER XIX.

Stow, Auguſt 7, 176).

TO MARIA.

WE are unexpectedly deprived of the company of my good friend Charles S****. He had propoſed to attend us as far as *Mancheſter*, but a letter that he received laſt night, acquainting him with the dangerous illneſs of a near relation, has obliged him to ſet off for *Berkſhire*, early this morning. We all regret the loſs of ſo agreeable and lively a companion; particularly miſs H***, if we may form any judgment, from her affecting to appear the moſt indifferent;—upon account of his *abſence*, the *occaſion* of it ſhe laments in the ſtrongeſt terms; and thus it is I ſuppoſe

that ſhe balances accounts in her own mind!

FROM the ſpecimens I have already given you of my friend's character, you will not wonder that Fanny ſhould be prejudiced in his favor. *She* calls it *friendſhip* at preſent; but it is attended with too many unfriendly palpitations and tranſcient confuſions, to impoſe itſelf upon *others* under that name. Indeed, altho' I will make a conſiderable allowance for the partiality which a long intimacy may have given me, I think him a moſt excellent character. He is truly benevolent without affecting benevolence; and he loves all mankind, tho' you would ſometimes ſuſpect from his converſation, that he was out of humor with the whole world. He has learned to maintain that eſſential diſtinction between the Crime and the Perſon, with as much preciſion, as any man I have ever converſed with. However ſevere he may be upon vice and folly at large,

large, he makes the moſt ample allowances for the failures of Individuals, in every caſe that does not indicate an obſtinate depravity of heart. But as my friend poſſeſſes an openneſs of temper, natural to perſons of this complexion, he is perpetually expoſed to the cenſures and impoſitions of moroſe or deſigning men. Thus have I known him accuſed of *Deiſm*, in the midſt of a debate in favor of *Chriſtianity*, becauſe he has given up as plunder to the enemy, points, which he thought no rational chriſtian could conſiſtently maintain;—charged with prophaneneſs upon account of the ludicrous manner in which he attacked the favourite dogma of ſyſtematic Chriſtians,—and cenſured for a criminal levity, becauſe the natural ſprightlineſs of his temper will not permit him to endure thoſe rigid reſtraints, which perſons of an oppoſite character would impoſe upon him. He lays it down as a maxim, that every ſpecies of *falſe* religion is an enemy to the

true; and that thoſe who are too ſcrupulous in trifles of their own invention, are very apt to indulge themſelves in things that are criminal, or to prejudice the cauſe of virtue by an ill-placed ſeverity of manners. My friend has taken ſome pains to think juſtly, but he has the imprudence to *ſpeak* as he thinks: and his whole ſyſtem of morals is ſo contrary to that of the world in general, that he is at tilts and tournaments with almoſt every body he meets. He indulges alſo to an extravagance in his expreſſions, proceeding from what might be pedantically called a *catachreſis* in his own ideas, that is, driving a thought to the very brink of an abſurdity, if he does not let it fall in.—To give a ſpecimen or two.

I WAS highly entertained ſometime ago with a warm diſpute between Charles and a lady of very rigid notions concerning *Shakeſpeare*'s plays. The lady ſaid ſhe had begun to read them, and acknowledged, that

that they abounded with juſt and beautiful ſentiments; but ſhe was obliged to lay the book aſide, upon account of the many *bad words* that were intermixed.

"As for me, ſays Charles, when the ſentiments are good, and the tendency moral, I never ſtand for a few high ſeaſoned expreſſions, neceſſary to ſupport the particular character. Habitual ſwearing I deteſt; but I am not much terrified at a few oaths, where there is any good to be got amongſt them."

THE Lady was ſilent, but ſhook her head, and lifted up her eyes and hands.

THIS kind of reply picqued my friend not a little, and taking his clue from the Lady's prevailing character, he anſwered her, "Madam I compare theſe exceptionable paſſages in *Shakeſpeare* to a *good turnpike road in rainy weather.* It is *dirty* in

ſome places if you will, and I could wiſh it otherways; but then it is *good at bottom*, and we may travel it in ſafety, and with advantage: whereas the principles of ſome of his warmeſt opponents, are quite the reverſe; they are like *a quagmire ſprinkled over with gravel.* When we hear them cry out with a plaintive voice of patience, and acquieſcence, *if it pleaſe the L—d, the L—d's will be done in all things*, we ſhould take them for the excellent ones of the earth! But down they ſink into ſome bog of ſpiritual pride, hypocriſy, or carnality, and remain ſo perfectly reſigned in this ſtate, that they ſeldom attempt to get out again!".

THIS, as you may ſuppoſe, did not mend the matter. The diſpute grew warmer, and the Lady of conſequence, proportionably more rigid in her ſentiments: till at length plays, cards, ſongs of all ſorts, but ſpiritual, were condemned in the ſtrongeſt terms; and

and all thoſe who loved or vindicated them, were anathematized without the leaſt glimpſe of mercy. Charles terminated the debate by telling her, "*you* may reſt your hopes of ſalvation upou what you pleaſe, Madam, but *I* ſhould as ſoon think of mounting up to heaven by *hanging upon the tail of a paper-kite*, as to render myſelf acceptable to my Maker, by the moſt rigid attention to ſuch trivial circumſtances as theſe."

He was once in company with another Lady, who was a very ſtrict profeſſor of Religion, but with whom, as he humorouſly expreſſes it, the *gift of tongue* could not be conſidered as a ſign of *converſion*. She had juſt been terminating a moſt violent fit of ſcolding, by expreſſing her impatience to leave this troubleſome world. "Tell me frankly Madam, ſays Charles, what conceptions have you formed of another? Do you think that your powers and faculties, will be ſo enlarged and ſtrengthened, that

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He was once in company with another Lady, who was a very ſtrict profeſſor of Religion, but with whom, as he humorouſly expreſſes it, the *gift of tongue* could not be conſidered as a ſign of *converſion*. She had juſt been terminating a moſt violent fit of ſcolding, by expreſſing her impatience to leave this troubleſome world. "Tell me frankly Madam, ſays Charles, what conceptions have you formed of another? Do you think that your powers and faculties, will be ſo enlarged and ſtrengthened, that

you ſhall be enabled to ſcold without wearineſs and without end?"

CHARLES and I were attending a trial one day in Weſtminſter-hall, where a counſellor of eminence was proſtituting his ſuperior talents in behalf of his client, to the manifeſt ſubverſion of the firſt principles of equity: "Well, ſays my friend, upon our leaving the court, with an indignant deliberation and gravity in his manner,—*a Kept miſtreſs*, who is conſtant to her preſent Gallant,—a *Procureſs*, who never deceives in her recommendation of her nymphs,—a *Gambler*, who pays with punctuality the debts contracted at the Table,—a *Duelliſt*, who behaves with politeneſs to his antagoniſt, after he has run him through the body,—an *Houſe-breaker*, who ſcorns to impeach his confederates,—an *Aſſaſſin*, who is faithful to his Principal,—and a *Counſellor*, who ſeeks to obtain a verdict for his Client, to the ſubverſion of Juſtice, and Oppreſſion of

of the Innocent, are Perſonages of ſuch ſimilar and ſingular Virtues, that they ought equally to have the honour of dying publick martyrs to their principles; or, according to the vulgar phraſe, *go to heaven together in a ſtring!*"

He applied to a merchant, as remarkable for his avarice as his wealth, for a charitable donation, upon ſome urgent occaſion. The gentleman appearing reluctant to attend to his ſuit, my friend urged it with the following ingenious plea: "Come Sir, ſays he, remember that the ſcriptures tell us, *he that gives to the poor lendeth to the Lord:* and the preſent pleaſure he enjoys is, in my opinion, better intereſt for his money than any the *Stocks* can give; and I think he may reſt as well ſatisfied about the *principle* too, as if he had *government* ſecurity for it!"

What is that young man babbling about, ſays old Gripus, whoſe ear was ſtruck

with the ſounds of Intereſt, Principle, Government ſecurity, as he ſat on the oppoſite ſide of the counting houſe.—Gripus is a partner in the houſe, and is one of thoſe vain loquacious mortals, who embrace every method of publiſhing their riches, excepting that of liberality:—What is that young man babbling about Principle and Intereſt? Let him come to me; I will give him a leſſon that may be of ſome ſervice to him. If I had not had a little more knowledge of theſe affairs than moſt men, I might have died a beggar too. But now, if pleaſe the L—d I live till next Chriſtmas, and I fear this d—d cough I cought three months ago by ſtanding in the rain, in 'Change-Alley driving a bargain with Mr. *Puff* the Broker,—will not let me live much longer, I hope to be worth little leſs than *fifty thouſand pounds!*

"WELL, but right rich Mr. Gripus, this *fifty thouſand pounds* will enable you to enlarge

large your circle of uſefulneſs moſt wonderfully. How many fatherleſs boys you may educate and ſet forward in the world! How many orphan girls may you decently clothe! How many bankruptcies of the Worthy may you prevent by prudent and timely loans! How many priſon doors you may ſet open! How many ——

PSHA, Pſha; do you think I'm a *fool!* To ſquander your money in that manner is not the way to die *rich*, let me tell you.

"To die rich! But Mr. Gripus, you will doubtleſs do a world of good after your deceaſe! At leaſt you will leave your numerous and poor relations, who have hitherto been wreſtling with miſery, eaſy and happy!

POOR *Relations!* ha! ha! ha! I have enough of them that's true, but what ſhould they do with it? They don't know the value

lue of money. No, Sir, I've ſettled every farthing on my old friend *Wealthy*. There is not a man upon 'Change, let me tell you, that knows the value of money better than he does! He'll make you *twelve* per Cent. eaſier, and upon better ſecurity too, than many a man will make *five*. No no, I know what I am about; *Dick Wealthy* is the man for my money!

WELL then, ſays Charles, die and be —— happier than that ſordid ſoul deſerves!

GRIPUS ſeemed more highly offended at this Bleſſing, than if the ſentence had terminated with the expected Malediction.

I SHALL conclude theſe few anecdotes concerning my friend with his deſcant on the virtue of *Prudence:* The only virtue in which he was defective. Perhaps this circumſtance enabled him to talk the more feelingly in commendation of it. There is nothing

nothing very ſingular either in the ſentiment or expreſſion, but it was a ſpecies of ſoliloquy ſpoken in lucid intervals, between two very imprudent actions, *viz.* preferring a party of pleaſure in the country, to ſome very intereſting buſineſs which demanded his attendance in town, and being duped by a worthleſs wretch, who prevailed upon him, by an air of frankneſs and honeſty, and by drawing an affecting picture of diſtreſs, to become his ſecurity. The villain was a bankrupt the next day, and left my friend to pay off a hundred pounds of his debts.

PRUDENCE.

PRUDENCE is that force of the mind which enables a man to contemplate things that *are not*, as if they *were*. It is a ſtrong and acute Reaſoner, diſcerning the natural tendency of cauſe and effect. It nicely calculates probabilities, whilſt it has the wiſdom to direct theſe probabilities to the greateſt

greateſt good. Prudence does more than a ſpirit of prophecy, for while this foretels how things will turn out, that teaches us how to avert the evils it foreſees. It poſſeſſes at the ſame time the principles of *ſelf-denial* and of *gratification.* It is true, a prudent man will ſeldom if ever enjoy *raptures*, becauſe we cannot call up the ſtrength of our affections at pleaſure; and ſince he has learned to ſubdue the preſent inclination, from the hopes of greater good in reverſion, when the bleſſing arrives, it is poſſible that the edge of his deſires be in a great meaſure blunted: yet he doubtleſs poſſeſſes upon the whole the greateſt *quantum* of happineſs, of good, of eſcapes from bitter ills, of ſelf-command, and conſequently of peace and convenience; and he paſſes through the many evils of life, like a ſpy through an hoſt of enemies. Now an *imprudent* man is reverſe of all this. He is the ſport of his feelings. He determines to poſſeſs and enjoy the preſent inſtant, whatever

ever it may coſt him! He is ſo ſeduced by the objects immediately before his eyes, that he foreſees no conſequences; or his paſſions are ſo rampant, that he cannot be deterred by them! For a *preſent* gratification he is moſt cruel to his *future ſelf!* This *moment* is his *eternity*. For he acts as if the ſmalleſt ſpace of time could never be paſt, as if futurity could never arrive. Like inſtinctive brutes, he is the ſlave of impreſſion! He has neither *Reaſon* nor *Will*, all is appetite and paſſion! Or ſhould he attempt to reaſon, he commits ſome fallacious ſyllogiſm in to the hands of impulſe, and madly attempts to out-reaſon reaſon itſelf! His deceitful glaſs magnifies things that are near, and diminiſhes thoſe at a diſtance to ſuch a degree, that the ſmalleſt preſent enjoyment ſwells out, and intercepts the proſpect of the largeſt future advantage! An imprudent man, like an infant, relies upon the wiſdom and aid of another, or he is miſerable beyond redemption! *One* half of his

his days are ſpent in involving himſelf in difficulties, and the *other* in employing his friends to extricate him! In the intervals of his folly he may ſpeculate juſtly; his own experience makes him ſeverely *feel*, and his feelings may make him *think*, but neither will make him *act!* He knows that his paſſions are his greater enemies, and yet he laughs at thoſe who *govern* their paſſions. He thinks himſelf *wiſe* becauſe he may be able to *ſay* a ſmart thing; and he calls thoſe *ſtupid* who only know how to *act wiſely* in ſilence! His moſt innocent amuſement, if he be a *wit*, conſiſts in playing with his ideas, as a kitten with a ſtring: And an imprudent man ought always to be a *wit*, or he degenerates into an abject fool! For he has nothing to ſave him from contempt, but the power of amuſing with his tongue, or of rendering himſelf formidable by the talent of turning others to ridicule.

Adieu.

LETTER XX.

The *Planetarium Politicum.*

—— Flagratque cupidine currus.

OVID.

LETTER XX.

Buckingham, Auguſt 9, 1769.

TO MARIA.

SINCE the departure of my Companion, I have taken my ſtation at Buckingham, where the Ladies propoſe to ſtay two days longer, and then proſecute their journey. I will not give you any farther deſcription of our employment, than that we amuſe ourſelves paſſing well. We laugh and talk, read, work, &c. in the true Bunclean ſtile.

EVERY man of gallantry, Maria, as often as he expects to be in company with Ladies, will take due care to change his pocket-book, with *amuſement-ammunition*. Mine was tolerably well ſupplied. It contained

tained no leſs than ten love ſongs, two hymns, the city paſtoral I have already tranſcribed for you, half a dozen riddles, three conundrums, and a few original pieces in proſe. Thus provided, I made a tender to the Ladies of my company in the coach this morning, as they took an airing, with a ſecret deſign to diſſipate the gloom, which too viſibly hung over the mind of our fair laſs, ſince the abſence of her friend. To accompliſh this deſign the more effectually, I propoſed reading to them a little *jeu deſprit*, written by our lively companion, who often employs a vacant hour in making humorous comments upon men and things, and in ſhooting at ſome vice and folly as they ariſe.

The firſt article I took out of my magazine was the following whimſical Addreſs, which I have tranſcribed for your peruſal, and ſhall ſubſtitute in the place of a letter, without either preface or comment.

THE

THE PLANETARIUM POLITICUM, OR POLITICAL PROJECT.

BEING A

SCHEME to pay off the NATIONAL DEBT, by the Influence of the PLANETS.

Humbly inſcribed to the L——DS of the T————Y.

My LORDS,

AT a period when our unbounded Liberality in fighting the battles of others, has involved the Nation in an immenſe Debt, and the laudable Generoſity of our Miniſters, in moſt amply rewarding the *ſlighteſt ſhadow* of Merit, (leaving the *ſubſtance* to be its own reward) puts it out of their power to pay off any conſiderable portion of this Debt; — When every Individual

dual in a *free* nation is *taxed* as heavily as offending *Slaves* are fined in other countries; any propoſal to relieve the publick burthen, and to make ample proviſion for the exigencies of the ſtate, not excluding even the gulf of ſecret ſervices, places, and penſions, ought to be received with pleaſure and gratitude.

THANKS to my ſtars, my Lords, I have found out a method which will infallibly anſwer all theſe deſireable purpoſes; and however fatigued your Lordſhips may be by an inceſſant application to national buſineſs, I humbly crave the attention of a few minutes to this my plan.

YOUR Lordſhips will doubtleſs have heard, that the ingenious Mr. M*** has invented a machine, ſo happily conſtructed, that it will move in any direction, and travel with great expedition without animal labor. Your Lordſhips muſt alſo know, that

that Aſtronomers have affirmed, they ſhall be able to aſcertain, by virtue of the laſt tranſit of *Venus*, both the true diſtance of the ſun from the earth, and of the planets from each other. We ſhall therefore be ſoon furniſhed with a ſelf-moving vehicle, and alſo with exact charts of the planetary ſyſtem. Here are *two* points happily gained: we want but two more effectually to complete my project;—ſo that it may be fairly conſidered as *half* done already: and altho', as your Lordſhips muſt be well appriſed, this is full as much as falls to the ſhare of public buſineſs in general, yet I could wiſh to render it *complete* and *perfect*. Let the *mechanic* Philoſopher only teach this machine to paſs through the air, where its motion will be attended with one peculiar advantage, the *velocity* of it will be increaſed in proportion as the centripetal reſiſtance is diminiſhed; and let the *aſtronomic* or *medical* Philoſopher, I care not which, find out ſome method of adapt-

ting our conſtitutions to any degree of heat, and my deſign will be eaſily accompliſhed. I will then undertake to render the *heavenly Bodies* of more benign influence to our globe, than the moſt vaunting aſtrologers could ever boaſt. In ſhort, my Lords, they ſhall pay off the national debt in leſs than a twelvemonth, and produce an inexhauſtable revenue beſides.

VARIOUS are the methods in which theſe deſireable ends may be obtained. I ſhall juſt propoſe one or two, to demonſtrate the practicability of my ſcheme, and leave your Lordſhips to deviſe as many others as you ſhall ſee fit. The power once obtained, I am pleaſed to think, that the modes of its application may be endleſs. I need not acquaint your Lordſhips, that the diſtance of the Sun from our World is ſuppoſed to be above *one hundred millions of miles*. A very conſiderable diſtance! And probably your Lordſhips are ſtill better acquainted, that

that the national debt is about *one hundred and forty millions of pounds!* A very *inconſiderable* ſum truly! For your Lordſhip will perceive, that it is not quite ſo much as after the rate of thirty ſhillings per mile from hence to the Sun! Now what I humbly propoſe is, that your Lordſhips will pleaſe to exert your influence with our patriotic Houſe of Commons,—where your Lordſhip's influence has never yet been exerted in vain,—in order to obtain an act for enabling government to purchaſe Mr. M***'s patent, that they may be ſole proprietors of his invaluable ſecret; that they order a competent number of aerial poſt-chaiſes to be made after his model; and that theſe poſt-chaiſes be let out to travellers at the reduced price of one penny per mile; which may eaſily be done, ſince there will be no expence of cattle, nor in maintaining the roads. How ſoon upon theſe reaſonable terms might not this debt be diſcharged! Three or four hundred young Bucks, who

ſhould juſt for a frolick take a journey to the ſun, might eaſe us of nearly the whole burden at once!

SHOULD it yet be objected, that, upon account of the extreme diſtance, the expences of travelling would yet be to great for any private fortune to ſupport,

THE legiſlature might very eaſily eſtabliſh a ſufficient number of *Toll-gates* in ſome of the planets, or at any ſuch diſtance or places as in their profound wiſdom ſhall ſeem beſt. Upon this plan, gentlemen may be allowed to provide their own carriages.

IF any one objects to this part of my plan, that we have no right to take ſuch liberties with other planets, or their diſtricts; we will not ſo readily give up the point, my Lords. Nay I am convinced, that a minute examination of the queſtion, will iſſue in the diſcovery of our title to much

much higher claims. If the opinion of ſome celebrated Divines and Philoſophers be true, that the planets are inhabited by the ſouls of the Deceaſed from this world,—and a fair opportunity will be given to aſcertain the fact,—our right is clear and indiſputable. For theſe inhabitants may be conſidered either as *Emigrants*, who have quitted our world without leave, and who therefore merit, not only this ſlight intruſion, but alſo the infliction of heavy fines, for their contempt of its laws and government; or they may be viewed in the milder light of *Colonies*, eſtabliſhed from this their mother country, and of conſequence ſubject to whatever laws we may think wiſe and proper to ordain. If the fact ſhould not be true, and the inhabitants ſhould prove to be of a ſpecies totally different, why then we muſt ſeek to eſtabliſh that moſt ſatisfactory of all rights to an honeſt mind, the right of *conqueſt*. With the *Moon* we may uſe yet greater freedoms. I would

inſiſt upon laying very ſevere impoſts upon her, as every aſtronomer can prove her entire dependance upon our globe; nor could ſhe, without the cloſeſt alliance with us, maintain her ſtation in the univerſe for four and twenty hours together, but would inevitably be ſwallowed up by ſome ſuperior power. The light ſhe enjoys from this Orb, ought moſt undoubtedly to become the ſubject of parliamentary enquiry: it being proved to a demonſtration, that ſhe receives in a tenfold proportion to what ſhe communicates to us. I humbly propoſe therefore that a due eſtimate be taken, that we tax the difference, and paſs a vote of an eternal eclipſe in caſe of an obſtinate refuſal. By the way, I have good reaſon to hope, that the *Man in the Moon* will be very ready to forward any ſcheme you may think it prudent to deviſe, upon the reaſonable terms of being appointed one of the collectors of the tolls.

BUT,

But, my Lords, I find that my ideas croud in too faſt upon me. I perceive, that in the very anſwering of objections, ten thouſand reſources open to my view, which time forbids me to enumerate. I ſhall therefore at preſent confine myſelf entirely to the advantages derived from *travelling*.

By the above eaſy and happy means, my Lords, of eſtabliſhing *aerial* or *planetarian* Toll-gates, immenſe ſums may be raiſed without any invidious monopoly, or without in the leaſt diſtreſſing individuals. For when we reflect, that a reſtleſs curioſity, and an unbounded love of novelty, are the characteriſtics of the preſent age, we cannot doubt a moment, but that the new paths which will be opened from our Globe to the Sun, and from one planet to another, will be as much frequented as the new *Iſlington road* on a ſummer-ſunday! Will your lordſhips permit me to take a curſory view of the places to which theſe

new paths will lead, and of the Travellers we may naturally expect to frequent them, in order to gain your confidence, that the ways and means will prove fully adequate to the greatneſs of your demands.

WHAT young Officer of ſpirit, for example, would be contented with loitering about the *Park*, when a trip to *Mars* might qualify him for a *General?*—Is there a *Buck* in London, that would not prefer a ramble to *Venus*, to haunting about the purlieus of *Covent-garden?* Or have we no lively Girls who would like to friſk it round the ſun with *Mercury?*—I am fully perſuaded, that *Venus* and *Mercury* would in a very little time be as well known, and as much frequented, as *Ranelagh* and *Vauxhall*; and that a mutual friendly intercourſe would be kept up between them. Thoſe who may have lived ſo long in *Venus*, as to have injured their conſtitutions, would naturally make a tour to *Mercury* for the benefit of their

their healths. As to the two other planets, there is ſuch a proſpect of an extenſive and profitable trade being opened with them, that the tolls muſt increaſe our finances immenſely. Nay, I can aſſure your Lordſhips, upon my having inadvertently dropt a hint of my plan in company, ſeveral very opulent Merchants have already entered into a combination, to buy up all the *Lead* which they ſuppoſe to be in *Saturn*; and all the *Gun-powder* that may be made in *Jupiter*. I ſay *ſuppoſed*, for they can only proceed at preſent upon *ſpeculation*. But it is wiſely conjectured, that *Saturn* has his name from abounding in *Lead-mines*, and that *Jupiter*'s thunders, of which the poets ſpeak ſo much, are no other than the blowing up of ſome of his *powder-mills*. How much the *Moon* will be frequented is too obvious, when we conſider that it will be the moſt proper receptacle for Lunatics.

To the amazing crouds that will doubtleſs frequent the new formed Roads, thro' intereſt or pleaſure, we may likewiſe add,

1. THE tribes who are fond of baſking in *ſun-ſhine*. Here all the unfortunate perſons about the court will be of the party.

2. THE thouſands of light-headed people of each ſex, who love to drive about, phaeton-like, and are the better pleaſed the farther they get from home.

3. THOSE diſcontented ſouls who are weary of the world, and would be glad to quit it upon any conditions, but thoſe of dying.

4. The whole race of Poets, who have often wiſhed and ſtrove in vain to ſoar aloft, and meet the Sun, may eaſily accompliſh their wiſhes in one of Mr. M's poſt-chariots, and approach as near to *Apollo* as they pleaſe. Perhaps it will now be objected on the other ſide, that ſuch a Number of emigrants will infallibly *depopulate* our globe.

globe. But I am not ſo apprehenſive of this. The young Officers will be glad to return to indolence and the Park, when they have been witneſſes to the warm work that there is in *Mars*, and after they have acquired the reputation of having *ſtudied abroad*. *Venus* and *Mercury* are too *ſmall*, if not too wiſe, to admit above a very limited number of theſe *terræ-fillii* together. And the other planets and parts of the univerſe would only be occaſionally viſited from motives of traffic :—Thoſe who are weary of the world, will be glad to return home when they find they cannot better their ſtate, and when they experience that all travelling is in vain, if they *carry themſelves* with them : — Your giddy people will doubtleſs viſit and reviſit this globe in rotation :—Thoſe who are fondeſt of high flights, will not refuſe to ſtoop to the Earth, to pick up either the money or the fame which they think they have merited by them. Beſides, my Lords, as it is the

property of heat to render all bodies *tranſparent*, thoſe who may advance too near the ſun, will begin to *ſee through one another*. I preſume they will find it mutually convenient to return with all expedition to their wonted opacity.

As your Lordſhips well know, by happy experience, that one honourable and lucrative ſtation often leads to another, thus it is alſo with uſeful diſcoveries. When we are ſomewhat familiarized with the *planets*, it may be very poſſible for us to maintain an intercourſe with the *fixt ſtars*. I need not ſay what a new and inexhauſtible ſource of merchandize, as well as of impoſts, will in this caſe be opened to us! — The ſigns of the Zodiac will furniſh us with *fiſh*, *ſcales*, *beef* and *mutton*, *goats fleſh*, &c. Berenice's locks will ſupply our ladies demands for falſe hair;—the *milky way* will afford us ſuch an abundance of milk, as muſt greatly

greatly leſſen the price of that uſeful and ſcarce commodity; the *greater* and *leſſer bears* will yield us furs;—the *North Pole* phoſphorus, &c. &c. A friend of mine is ſo ſanguine in his hopes, that he has already commiſſioned a gentleman departing this life, to engage *Charles*'s *Waggon* for him, ſhould his ſoul chance to paſs by that way! But I lay no great ſtreſs upon this part of my plan at preſent, it being rather more conjectural.

THESE, my Lords, are a few indigeſted hints relative to my uſeful plan, which I numbly ſubmit to your Lordſhips inſpection and patronage. I am well aware, notwithſtanding the great pains I have taken to obviate every objection, that the whole of this my ſcheme for the publick good, will be treated by ſome as merely viſionary, and be condemned as *abſurd* and *impoſſible*. Such perſons I ſincerely deſpiſe; and it is with

with a degree of confidence that I refer myſelf and my cauſes to Perſonages, whoſe elevated ſtations, and yet more elevated *minds*, enable them to diſcern as practicable, what *vulgar ſouls* have always conſidered as palpable contradictions! Your Lordſhips may perhaps be furniſhed with evidences of this aſſertion from your own obſervation and extenſive experience. What abſolute contradictions have not been perfectly reconciled by men in power? Have they not profuſely ſquandered away the publick money, my Lords, and yet been *very faithful ſtewards?* Have they never encroached upon the common rights of mankind, and yet remained the *truſty guardians* of our laws?—Betrayed the intereſt of their Conſtituents, and yet been *honorable* and *right honorable* repreſentatives? As ſuch things my Lords have been reconciled by men in power, ſurely we need not deſpair of any thing. *All impoſſibilities* are *equally* impoſſibilities; the

the diſtinction betwixt *moral* and *phyſical* ones is therefore vain and futile. As great men have frequently ſubdued the *former*, I could ſincerely wiſh them to turn their attention towards the *latter*. In the moſt ſanguine hopes of ſucceſs I remain,

My L——s,

Your L——dſhips

Moſt devoted

Humble Servant.

LET-

LETTER XXI.

A MEDICAL PREFACE.

——— Opiferque per Orbem
Dicor. ———

OVID.

LETTER XXI.

Buckingham, Auguſt 10, 1769.

MY firſt preſcription proved tolerably efficacious. Miſs H***'s Sorrow was now agreeablyblended with an increaſed admiration of the Object, on whom ſhe has, perhaps without knowing it herſelf, placed her affections. She joined, with great ſpirit, in the encomiums which were paſſed upon the little compoſition I had read; and ſhe was highly pleaſed with my promiſing her a ſimilar treat upon ſome future occaſion. This morning, as we were at breakfaſt, ſhe reminded me of this promiſe. I accordingly read to her the incloſed Medical Preface. It has ſo far completed the cure, as to render our fair Lady a more chearful and lively companion than ſhe has lately been.

WE

We propoſe leaving this place to-morrow. The next tidings you will hear of us, will be either from *Matlock* or *Buxton*; which of the two cannot be as yet determined.

But before I give you the Preface, it will be neceſſary to inform you, that my friend Charles was deſtined by fortune to be a *phyſician*. Now ſhe could ſcarcely have thought of any profeſſion which could have put his temper and principles to ſeverer trials. He wants neither capacities nor application; and as a ſpeculative man he is highly entertained with the various branches of ſtudy that are preparatory to practice. But he wants what is infinitely more *eſſential* to his ſucceſs in the world, I mean the *external farce* of phyſic. He is more than a Stranger, he is an open Enemy to this. Nor could he ever reconcile himſelf to it, either by the perſuaſion of his friends, or from any motives of prudence.

dence. His maxim is, he that deceives in any one inſtance, for the ſake of intereſt, has a heart fit for a *pick-pocket:* nor is it owing to himſelf, but to a fortuitous concurrence of circumſtances, that he is *not* one. He had not been half a year in practice, before he was on the point of being caſt away, as he expreſſes it, by running foul on a *tye-wig*. Viſiting a patient with a *bag* in his hair, at a time when it was ſcarce allowable for even an apothecary's 'prentice to wear any other than a *folio*, the gentleman looked ſtedfaſtly in his face for a minute or two, and then aſked him in a tone of inquiſitive ſurpriſe, if *he was the Doctor?*

YES, Sir. But why do you aſk with that air of Surprize?

BECAUSE you look like a *gentleman.*

THAT is, my head does not appear conſequential enough to cure you? How do you know but that I am a deſcendant of *Sampſon,*

Sampſon, and that my ſtrength lies in my *hair?* But, Sir, ſays he jocoſely, I have a *tye-wig* of ample magnitude, hanging upon a ſolitary peg in my barber's ſhop, if you think any ſkill or efficacy can be derived from it, I will ſend for it with all my heart!

He made this propoſition in ſo humourous a tone, that the patient was rather pleaſed than otherwiſe, and took his preſcription with equal faith and ſucceſs.

My friend is far from being, what many of the faculty are, an *infidel* in phyſic; though he is a *ſceptic* reſpecting many doctrines commonly received. Nay he maintains, that were the practice eſtabliſhed upon a proper footing, it might prove of the utmoſt utility. But he ſuſpects, that according to the general mode of procedure, it is rather a prejudice than a benefit to mankind. How often, ſays Charles, is a phyſician of ſkill and eminence called in

in merely to cover the Ignorance, when it is too late to correct the *Blunders* of ſome former practitioner. The diſeaſe has been tampered with till the Patient is on the point of expiring, and then an ignorant apothecary ſends for a phyſician, not to ſave the *patient*, but *himſelf*. The Doctor arrives, he finds the ſeaſon for exerting his ſkill irrecoverably gone. He preſcribes;—the patient dies with the medicine in his mouth;—the Doctor takes his leave, ſatiſfied with his fee;—the Apothecary rejoices that the Dr. came to give the viaticum, and take off every imputation from his ſhoulders;—and the Family comfort themſelves, that all in their power has been done to give the patient a fair chance for his life!

A YOUNG phyſician, on the other hand, ſays Charles, ſcarcely gains ſo much attention as the Apothecary's boy that mixes his maſter's draughts and boluſſes, and his directions are perpetually neglected or oppoſed,

poſed, even without an apology. He is little more than the *oſtenſible man*, to whom it is convenient for Nurſes and Goſſips to impute all the ill conſequences of their ignorance and preſumption,—the *ſcape goat* that takes away the ſins of the people.—He muſt either give a ſanction to their erroneous opinions, or expect to be openly contradicted. In either caſe it is odds but he be deprived of the *honour of the cure*, and ſuffer all the imputation of ill ſucceſs.

I WAS once called, ſays he, to a Lady, whom a ſudden ſurprize had thrown into a violent hyſterical fit. She was ſomewhat recovered before I arrived, ſo as to be able to take a remedy. I preſcribed a draught, in which *aſſafætida* was unfortunately an ingredient. A female couſin, whom they had ſent for in their fright as a *knowing woman*, had an inſuperable objection to *aſſafætida*, becauſe one of her relations, who had been in a deep decline for *ſeven* years, died

died ſoon after ſhe had taken an aſſafœtida pill; and I never will believe, ſays ſhe, but that it was the naſty aſſafœtida that killed her!

THE draught was omitted; the fits returned with double violence. A *bliſter* was recommended. The Couſin had not much objection to this, becauſe ſhe believed bliſters were *ſafe things*, but the *Huſband*'s prejudices now began to operate. He could not bear the name; it was only tormenting the poor creature for nothing: — beſides, he did not believe that they were of any ſervice, for he had obſerved, that the patients moſtly died under them.

I HAVE known a pain in the bowels, quoth Charles, manifeſtly of the *inflammatory* kind, treated firſt with a little ſaffron tea, and a ſpoonful of brandy; ten minutes afterwards, ſome double diſtilled pepper-mint water, and brandy, were ad-

miniſtered; a third perſon recommended a little *ginger* as excellent to diſpel wind; a fourth, ſome mull'd wine with ſpices; a fifth, burnt brandy; a ſixth, a glaſs of pure Holland's gin; all within the compaſs of three hours. The patient grew delirious, and died before morning; and the attendants ſuſpected that her Doctor had miſtaken her caſe!

But to the Preface,

A MEDICAL PREFACE.

Gentle Reader,

IT is certainly no ſmall inſtance of preſumption, in an obſcure Individual, to aim at attracting the publick attention to any thing he may have to offer. Authors in general are ſo ſenſible of this, that they think it decent to ſoothe and prepare the minds of their Readers, by ſome very reſpectful and ſubmiſſive apology. One tells you, that he is ſolely influenced by the proſpect of communicating important diſcoveries, that have an immediate tendency to inform and improve mankind, to whoſe ſervice all his talents are generouſly devoted, and his whole *time* alſo—excepting indeed ſo much as may be requiſite, to enquire, which of the bookſellers will make the moſt liberal propoſals for his copies. A *ſecond* profeſſes it to be his higheſt ambition to

leſſen the many evils of life, and beguile its ſorrows, by contributing his ſhare to the innocent amuſement of an idle hour; and he ſends forth a romance, calculated to corrupt the principles of half the youth in the kingdom. A *third* declares himſelf to be ſo ſtrongly ſollicited by his friends, that he can no longer reſiſt their repeated importunities. His virgin-modeſty is at length ſubdued; though he aſſures you it was not without the moſt violent conflicts; and like ſome others, who once had virgin-modeſty, he not only throws himſelf upon the town, but becomes perhaps one of the moſt forward and impertinent creatures in it!

It may be thought incumbent upon *me* alſo, in imitation of theſe my brethren, to produce my apology upon commencing author. But as I cannot, either in prudence or in conſcience, adopt any of theirs, which carry the marks of *impoſture* in their face,

face, I will venture to throw aſide the maſk at once, and boldly ſpeak the truth, both for them and myſelf.

Be it known unto thee therefore moſt *courteous*, *candid*, *benevolent*, and *intelligent* Reader, that all of us to a man, whatever we may aſſert to the contrary, are actuated by a principle of *ſelf-intereſt*, as the leading motive. Nor ſhould we be ſo ready to inſtruct or amuſe, did we not expect to be paid ſome way or other for our leſſons, and the amuſements we afford. I will not waſte my ink in vindicating a principle ſo univerſally prevalent; but ſhall rather proceed to point out the manner in which it operates upon *us of the faculty*, and explain with what particular views *we* are ſo ready to favor the world with our lucubrations.

It is well known, that the Dignity of Phyſic will by no means allow us, the *legitimate* ſons of Hypocrites, to make uſe

of thoſe aids to advancement in the world, which every other vocation, and even the *illegitimate* offspring of medicine enjoy. We are not permitted to hang out our ſigns, to boaſt of our ſkill and our commodities, to intreat your cuſtom, and aſſure you how very ready and happy we ſhall at all times be to ſerve you. The youngeſt Practitioner is obliged, the moment he arrives in town, to take it for granted, that his Merits are ſufficiently conſpicuous to recommend him to general notice; and it would be deemed little leſs than an affront, to enquire in what quarter of the town he may reſide, though, as yet perhaps, he may not have taken lodgings. But although we are denied the tricks of trade common to *others*, our conſiderate cuſtomers expect and require us to have ſome of *our own*. Learning, Genius, Experience, are not of themſelves ſufficiently important to gain their confi-

dence,

greater depth than the head it covers; that the ſword itſelf is emblematical; that the formal cane is a more neceſſary prop to the Doctor's reputation than to his legs; and that the pompous roquelaure is merely a *Cloak*: and they are now driving us to take another ſtep, which is,

To ſtep into our Chariots.

The Chariot was formerly no ſmall evidence of extenſive practice, by which it was naturally introduced. It was an indulgence claimed by Veterans in the ſervice, to relieve their weary ſteps, or aſſiſt the infirmities of declining years. We are not to wonder therefore that it ſhould ſoon become a vehicle of the firſt importance, and that Diſeaſe and Death ſhould tremble at the ſound of its wheels. But the public immediately fell into their old train of reaſoning. They now began to ſubſtitute the *Chariot* for the *Doctor*, and nothing could be a greater evidence of want of *ſkill*

than the want of a *Carriage*. The popular ſyllogiſm ran thus; they who have extenſive practice muſt neceſſarily keep a chariot, therefore, they who keep their chariot muſt neceſſarily have extenſive practice. This obliged us to call in the aids of the Coachmaker towards building up our reputation, and as by our dreſs and air we were transformed into the ſemblance of antiquity, we found it our intereſt alſo to enjoy its indulgencies. Thus does the young Practitioner now mount his ſplendid Car, and make his diurnal revolutions round the town, driving plagues, fevers, and every dire diſorder before him, with equal eaſe and equal majeſty, as Sol diſperſes the darkneſs and malignant vapours of the night!

But this ſtratagem is alſo too manifeſtly loſing its force. It begins to be doubted by ſome, whether our vehicles may not be ſtronger proofs of the largeneſs of a private fortune,

dence, they inſiſt upon our *laying traps to catch it.*

THE firſt artifice enjoined upon us was, to wear the maſk of ſuperior AGE, GRAVITY, and WISDOM. Whoever *appeared* ancient and venerable, was ſuppoſed to be inevitably an adept in the healing art. This notion became ſo univerſal, that it obliged ſeveral of us, who, unfortunately, had not paſſed our grand climacteric, to antiquate our faces with the enormous tye, buckle on the formal ſword, ſupport our tottering ſteps with the truſty cane, and ſcreen our frigid bodies with the copious roquelaure. This ſcheme ſucceeded to our utmoſt wiſhes. The Garb ſoon became of equal importance with its Maſter; nay, it even gained the aſcendancy; ſo that it was deemed a more pardonable defect in the Practitioner to leave his *ſkill* behind him, than the inſignia of his profeſſion. Another very conſiderable, though unex-

pected advantage alſo ſprung from this peculiarity of dreſs; while it rendered the Doctor aged and venerable in the public eye, it fortunately diſtinguiſhed *his* from every other occupation: Thus the Practitioner became a kind of *moveable ſign-poſt* to himſelf, and was enabled to exhibit his own profeſſion, in all the parts of the town he viſited.

— Oh thoſe were the *halcyon days* of phyſic, when Fame and Reputation could be acquired at ſo cheap a rate! When taylors, ſword-cutlers, and peruque-makers, fitted out the phyſician better than examinations and deplomas! When the formalities of dreſs were all the certificates which the good-natured world required! But alas theſe happy days are on the wing! Our ſceptical age, which doubts of every thing, begins to ſuſpect that the buſhy peruque may *hide a vague* face, as well as ſet off a grave one, and that it is often of

greater

the Vulgar and Illiterate! In ſhort, what was once a mark of honourable diſtinction, is now ſunk down into an article of *neceſſity*. It is now as incumbent upon the Phyſician to publiſh his treatiſe, as it is upon the merchant to keep his country-houſe. It does not indeed give him the ſuperiority it uſed to give; but it enables him to maintain his level amongſt thoſe of the ſame vocation, and prevents his being confounded with the common herd. Thus are we, in a certain ſenſe, reduced to the ſtate of a Bookſeller's authors; we are forced to *write* for our living; for he that ſays nothing, is ſhrewdly ſuſpected of having nothing to ſay, and he that has nothing to *ſay* in this puffing age, cannot be ſuppoſed to have much to do.

THE *intelligent Reader* muſt therefore ſee the neceſſity I am under of taking up the pen in my own defence; but as he is a *benevolent* one too, I can perceive him apprehenſive

henſive leaſt I ſhould *injure* my reputation, inſtead of advancing it. Is it not better, he will ſay, to remain in abſolute obſcurity rather than *expoſe* yourſelf to the world? Is there not a greater probability that your crude juvenile performances will attract more hiſſes than plaudits, when you bring them upon the publick ſtage?

I MOST heartily thank him for theſe his fears; and will in return acquaint him with a certain Secret which has effectually cured mine. I have read many of the late medical productions; and I have read ſome of them with infinite ſatisfaction. They have convinced me, that it is by no means ſo difficult to write a Treatiſe as I had imagined. They have relieved me from a burthen which has long lain heavy upon my mind, by demonſtrating that Genius and Abilities, are not at all requiſite in thoſe who venture to be candidates for literary emoluments. It is true, they do not at all times

adapt

fortune, or the boldneſs of an enterprizing genius, than of ſuperior ſkill or extenſive practice; ſo that in fact, many are ſuſpected of keeping their carriages, whoſe carriages are by no means ſuſpected of keeping them! I heard an unlucky wag, the other day, give to one of theſe machines the opprobrious appellation of the *Doctor's wig-box*: and another, upon ſeeing a young practitioner in all his ſplendor, had the impudence to apply to him that paſſage in Ovid,

Similis eſt currus inani!

THOSE amongſt us who have any ſkill in *prognoſtics*, conſider theſe as moſt alarming ſymptoms; and except we can find means to purify the air from ſuch contagious breath, circulation muſt ceaſe, and the ſprings of motion loſe all their power of acting!

THE moſt effectual methods hitherto thought of to remedy theſe evils, is a ge-

neral determination publickly to adminiſter, pro re nata, ſpecimens of our Penetration, Experience, and Erudition.

To be able to *write a book*, uſed to be conſidered ſuch a maſterly effort of genius, as raiſed the name and character of the thrice happy Author, ſeveral degrees above his brethren. This diſtinguiſhed honor at firſt conferred upon the *few*, neceſſarily excited the envy and emulation of the *many*; and the popular argument ſimilar to the preceding, viz. that as a learned man can write a book, ſo he that writes a book muſt be a learned man, happily favoured this ſpirit of emulation. The conſequence is, that every one, in the preſent day, is catching at the laurels; and although by their being divided amongſt ſuch numbers, they loſe much of their original glory, and degenerate into mere *bay leaves*; yet one of theſe leaves becomes the badge of an Order, which places the poſſeſſor above the

adapt themſelves to weak capacities; but, what is infinitely better, they encourage weak capacities to tread in their ſteps. I obſerve, and what can be more encouraging, that ſome have eſtabliſhed their characters, by employing themſelves, like a painter's 'prentice, in copying of Originals, and very feebly imitating the maſterly performance of their ſuperiors.—Others honeſtly ſubſtitute *one* excellency, which is within their power, for *others* they cannot ſo eaſily attain. Thus have I often ſeen a clear paper, and the regular arrangement of well formed types, ſubſtituted in the place of perſpicuous language, or regularity of ideas.—Some have acquired the character of *voluminous* writers, merely by ſwelling the contents of an Almanack into the ſize of a pompous octavo. They wiſely judge that a *large* book is not ſo eaſily *overlooked* as a *ſmall* one; and philoſophically reflect, that *Lead* itſelf may, by the expanſion of its ſurface, be kept from *ſinking*; and that *Children* who

who cannot ſwim of themſelves, are often buoyed up with *bladders*—Others, on the contrary, find that they are heard for their *much* ſpeaking, and therefore it is no wonder, that they make uſe of *vain repetitions*.—Some few render themſelves acceptable by the beauty of their ſtile, and neatneſs of compoſition, as many a polite practitioner gains a reputation, by preſcriptions which are much more elegant and palatable than efficacious.—Numbers alſo ſucceeds to admiration, by ringing perpetual changes, as it were, upon the various parts of medical knowledge. Their productions are formed, like *Epicurus'* worlds, not by the *creation* of *new* materials, but by the different combinations, and apparently *fortuitous* concourſe of the ſcraps and atoms of ſcience, which have long exiſted.

If therefore I can but imitate either of theſe methods, or, which would be ſtill better, ſtrike out a new one of my own, I have

have a right to expect ſimilar indulgence from the candid and impartial public. Theſe authors have found their productions beneficial to their intereſts, and why ſhould *I* deſpair? By my publications I ſhall likewiſe be introduced to the world as an *author*, and to confeſs the truth, this is the grand object we have in view; and as it is upon this title that we place our chief dependance, it becomes not a ſubject of any great moment what our productions will prove, or what will be their fate. An Eſſay is often, like a *ſcaffold*, of the utmoſt ſervice to us whilſt we are building up our reputation, tho' perhaps it may he fit for no one purpoſe afterwards; it may be the *foundation* of a perſon's fame, though, like other foundations, it *lie for ever out of ſight*. The truth is, hundreds will certainly have heard of his work to one that will critically *read* it; ſo that there is, in the firſt inſtance, the chance of a hundred to one in his favour. If it be acceptable, it is *well*; but ſhould it prove

prove weak and puny, and die within a fortnight, it will *ſilently* retire from the world, and the author may ſtill be reſpected as a Parent, though his Offspring be little better than *ſtill-born.*

WHAT will be required of us as the next mode of introduction into life, I cannot abſolutely determine; but if we may be allowed to form prognoſtics from preſent appearances, there is reaſon to ſuſpect, that every Phyſician will be obliged to invent and proclaim his *noſtrum.* The great encouragement which is given to every preſumptuous intruder, may at length drive us to this. But here, gentle Reader, affairs grow rather more ſerious; and we would earneſtly expoſtulate with you not to compel us to become ſuch egregious impoſtors. Have a little mercy upon your own healths! Spare what yet remains of our Honeſty and Conſcience! Do not force us to impoſe upon you, by vaunting *inactive*

Medi-

Medicines, by which you make us little better than *Pickpockets*; nor tempt us to leave *active* ones to your own diſcretion, by which you will claſs us with *Banditti*, who *murder* as well as rob! Yet, if you will be reſolute, and inſiſt upon being deceived, let us humbly crave this favour, that you will not *contemn* us for thoſe very pretenſions you oblige us to make; that you will not, excepting in the laſt article, treat us as you do the herd of Quacks, whoſe *Ignorance* you *deſpiſe*, whoſe *Preſumption* you *laugh* at, whoſe *Company* you *ſhun*,—and whoſe *Medicines* you *take!*

Adieu.

End of Vol. II.

ERRATA.

Page 57, l. 9, for *rebearſal*, r. *recital*.
68, l. 11, for *affectation*, r. *affection*.
69, l. 3, for *motions*, r. *motives*.
81, l. 15, for *mighty*, r. *nightly*.
93, l. 3, dele *ing*.
112, l. 17, after *open to*, add *all*.
——— l. 18, dele *all*.
130, l. 11, for *evocation*, r. *antagoniſt*.
229, verſe 8, l. 3, after *chairs*, add *are*.
261, l. 12, for *change*, r. *charge*.
278, l. 2, for *cauſes*, r. *cauſe*.
287, l. 2, for *cauſes*, r. *cauſe*.